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EDWARD OWEN GREENING

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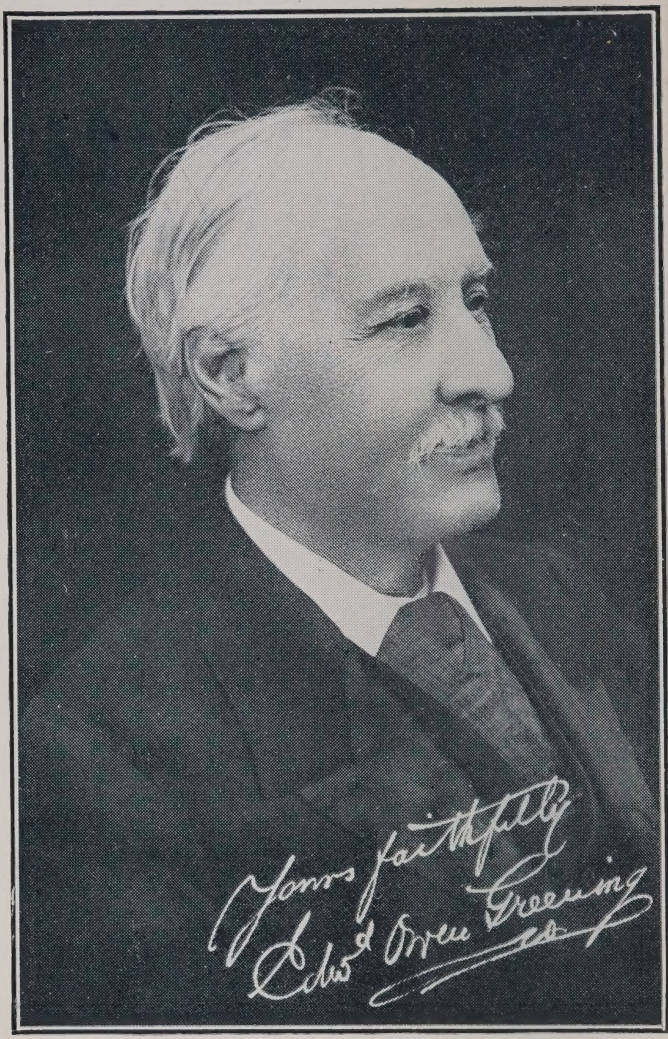


EDWARD OWEN GREENING.

EDWARD OWEN GREENING

A MAKER OF MODERN CO-OPERATION

BY

TOM CRIMES

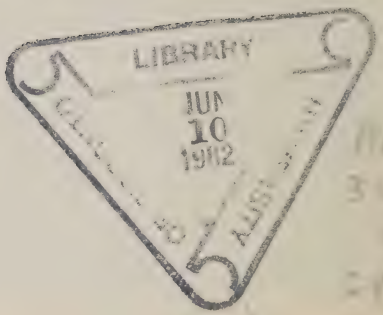
MANCHESTER: THE CO-OPERATIVE UNION LTD.,
HOLYOAKE HOUSE

1923

THE VISION

WHAT we aim at is complete co-operation, embracing every branch of human life. We promise to develop the highest ideals of Socialism by a voluntary plan, without State intervention. Above everything, we say, we must believe and recognise that the first thing is not to make money, but to make men. We must introduce into the business world the essential principle of human partnership, or, to put it in co-operative words, of human brotherhood.—

EDWARD OWEN GREENING, at the Working Men's College, London, in 1889.



FOREWORD

THE last word has been written, and "Edward Owen Greening: A Maker of Modern Co-operation" is now in the hands of the publishers. It has been a congenial task getting together the material, sifting it, and putting it into book form. The author in this work has had the assistance of many friends, including James Bonar, LL.D. (Vice-President, Labour Copartnership Association), Professor F. Hall, M.A. (Adviser of Studies, Co-operative Union), Messrs. H. Stanley Jast (Chief Librarian, Manchester), W. H. Brown (Manchester), R. Halstead (formerly Secretary of the Co-operative Productive Federation), Jas. A. Flanagan (Editor-in-Chief, National Co-operative Publishing Society), E. W. Mundy, B.A. (Secretary, Labour Copartnership Association), J. J. Worley (Secretary, Co-operative Productive Federation), and T. W. Mercer (Co-operative Union), as well as of Mrs. E. O. Greening herself. He acknowledges publicly—he has already expressed his thanks privately—his indebtedness to them for their advice, suggestions, and help generally. Had they not been "friends indeed" it is quite possible that many interesting facts concerning Greening and his varied activities would not have found a place in this little book.

The author, in writing this book, has had a definite aim—to give a true picture of Greening, to show the man at work, and to describe how the Co-operative Movement (which is largely indebted to him for the establishment of the Co-operative Congress and the Co-operative Union)

grew up around him. He has also made reference to many men with whom Greening was associated in co-operative effort in the old days, including some of whom all knowledge has passed out of the mind of the present generation of co-operators. Hughes, Neale, Holyoake, and Mitchell are still remembered; but one can go to co-operative conferences for twelve months and not hear the names of such men as Dr. John Watts, J. C. Edwards, and the Rev. W. N. Molesworth even mentioned. Yet they all did something worthy of remembrance.

Reference has also been made to the public work of Greening, not only because much of it had a direct bearing on the progress and development of Co-operation and Social Reform generally, but because without such reference the portrait of the man would be lacking in essential details.

It should perhaps be added that much of the information contained in the following pages has been taken from an uncompleted autobiography which Mr. Greening began to write several years before his death. Other information incorporated in this volume was given to the writer by Mr. Greening himself during the Easter week-end meeting held in Gloucester, at Easter, 1922.

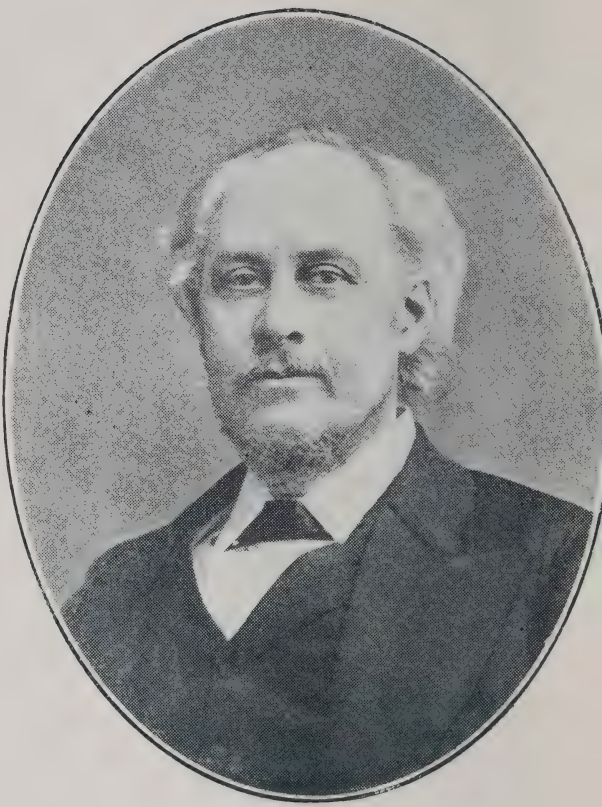
The author respectfully dedicates "Edward Owen Greening: A Maker of Modern Co-operation" to all those who are seeking, as Greening sought, the betterment of mankind.

T. C.

MANCHESTER,
September, 1923.

EDWARD OWEN GREENING AS A YOUNG MAN.

From a portrait presented with the *Commonwealth*, November 3rd, 1866.



"E. C. G." IN MIDDLE LIFE.

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They only who build on ideas
build for Eternity.—EMERSON

CHAPTER I

AN IDEA OF THE MAN

A Noteworthy Personality—Gifts and Graces—No Fireside Thinker—A Warring Atom—Reminder of John Bright—Quakerism and Prize Fighting—Ready Writer—Public Speaker—Interest in Politics—Lover of Flowers.

EDWARD OWEN GREENING was essentially a man of ideas. His brain was a remarkably successful productive organism. Entering the Co-operative Movement at the age of twenty, he rapidly came to the front among co-operative leaders and remained in the forefront until his death, sixty odd years later.

Some of his ideas, in part, may have lived before, but when re-introduced or expanded by him they were clothed in all the springlike freshness of originality. On many occasions he undoubtedly led the whole Movement into new and wider realms of thought.

No one who knew "E. O. G."—and who, taking the slightest interest in Co-operation, did not?—will infer that he was simply a fireside thinker. Blessed with a constitution that any man might envy, he seldom missed a gathering of any importance, wherever it was held. His voice, like that of the poet's dream, was "sweet and entrancing," and, given the occasion, he could rise to real eloquence. His command of language was no less wonderful than his voice. His general tone when speaking was

like that of the sea calmly lulled to sleep by the evenin breeze; but there have been times, as members of th older generation of co-operators know well, when h could be, oratorically, a Mount Etna in eruption, and pou out words with all the penetrating deadliness of mustar gas. He could tear "a passion to tatters" with the sam facility as he did two well-known daily papers at th Brighton Congress in 1922.

At another Congress, held much earlier, he was accuse by a coming leader of Co-operation of saying somethin "tartish and unpleasant" and asked to withdraw. H immediately did so, with all his customary graciousnes adding, "I am afraid I use rather strong words at times" Certainly no man ever crossed over Greening's path wit impunity.

He took part in only one Parliamentary contest as candidate, but reports of that memorable occasion sugges that "E. O. G.," if his opponents so desired, could figh with the gloves off. It was said of John Bright that "if h had not been a Quaker he would have been a prize fighter." The expression was probably used in a figurative sens to illustrate Bright's sturdy determination to stand up fo what he believed to be right. It would not be surprisin if the same remark were applied to "E. O. G." with simila intent. He was a Unitarian, and received the greater par of his education at a Quakers' school; but that did no prevent him giving or accepting battle on behalf of cause which he espoused.

Another gift of his was the pen of a ready writer. His facility in this respect was amazing. He could write a article denouncing slavery with the same ease that he could accept an invitation to attend the opening of a co-operative store. Every important co-operative journal—those that are living as well as those that are dead—was enriched by

his writings. Nor did he confine his writing to co-operative journals; some of the principal newspapers in the country accepted contributions from him; and, as in his speeches, however one might disagree with his views, one would find it difficult to quarrel with his diction. There is abundant evidence that in the days of his youth he lighted his torch at the best in English and foreign literature, and he proved as much as anyone the Baconian theory of the effects reading, writing, and speaking have upon men. Despite these activities—and they were all more or less concurrent —"E. O. G." could still find time to organise congresses and institutes for the Co-operative Movement and new business undertakings for himself.

Everything he touched did not turn to gold, but to him, as to all who are seeking to penetrate the unknown by dimly-lighted paths, failure was nothing more than a spur to still more vigorous thought and action. Quite early in his co-operative career he laid it down that "men who only connect themselves with successful things, as a rule, never initiate anything. They are not the men who lead the van of progress." George Eliot expresses a similar thought in different words:—

> Nay! never falter; no great deed is done
> By falterers who ask for certainty.

Greening had too much of the pioneer spirit in him to ask for a certainty, and he certainly could not be accused of being a falterer.

He was a keen politician, and a brilliant conversationalist. The United Kingdom Alliance claimed him as an adherent in the temperance cause; but "My Lady Nicotine" never induced him to worship at her shrine. His love for flowers was exceeded only by his love for the family circle. One of his intimate friends for many years

(Mr. Robert Halstead) says "he could be a boy or a philosopher with equal ease inside his own or other people's homes."

Such was the man who lived for eighty-six years, a wonderful achievement in itself. He was ever at war with social injustice, but the influences which led him to espouse the cause of reform must be left to the succeeding chapter.

We are not sent into this world to do anything into which we cannot put our hearts.—RUSKIN: "The Seven Lamps of Architecture."

CHAPTER II

FORMATIVE INFLUENCES

Human Tragedies—Men versus Machinery—A Woman's Tact—The Quaker Schoolmaster—Wire Worker Apprentice—Uncongenial Surroundings—Condition of the People—Slave Stories—Meeting with Holyoake—First Public Speech—Temperance Worker—Interested in Co-operation.

FORMATIVE social influences began to play around Edward Owen Greening at a very early age. He was a mere toddler, certainly not more than four years old, when he saw, perhaps with uncomprehending eyes, one of the saddest of all human tragedies—men and women driven to acts of violence through poverty, hunger, and despair.

> Oh, they listened, looked, and waited,
> Till their hope became despair;
> And the sobs of low bewailing
> Filled the pauses of their prayer.

Men and women wanted work, and they could not get it. "Machinery," they said to one another, "is the cause of all our troubles; let us up and smash it." Co-operative ownership and control might have made their enemy their friend and servant, but ignorance, which had no connection with bliss, kept them from moving towards the light. They were rapidly reaching a state of physical exhaustion and mental blindness, and apparently had made up their minds to stake

all on a gambler's throw. " If we break the machinery," some argued, " the mill and factory owners will have to return to hand labour, which means work for us and bread for our bairns." It was the old story of " little to earn and many to keep."

These desperate " Plugites " formed bands, whose business it was to go to the mills and factories and draw the plugs of the steam boilers, thereby letting the water escape and bringing the machinery to a standstill. This was an offensive against the inevitable, and beyond demonstrating that the workers were dissatisfied with things as they were, it achieved nothing. The machinery was repaired and went on working for the masters. It would have been just as happy working for the men !

Greening's father had a wire-drawing mill at Bedford Leigh, in Lancashire, where the family were living in 1840, and this mill, there is reason to believe, was marked down for damage if not total destruction. The father had to go to Manchester periodically, and on one occasion, whilst he was away, Mrs. Greening received word that a band of " Plugites " were on the march to the mill. She immediately put the house in a condition of defence, and then, in an upper room, with her four young children gathered round her, calmly waited events.

The " Plugites " duly arrived at the house on their way to the mill, which was further down the lane, and they presented a pitiable appearance. They had no need to speak ; their faces and general bearing indicated that they were on the verge of starvation. It was an awkward situation for a mother with four children to tackle. But Mrs. Greening did not flinch. She went to the window, opened it, and spoke sympathetically to the famished men and women assembled below. Had she been inclined to give sympathy only there might have been trouble. But she

emptied the larder of its many good things and distributed these amongst the crowd. The eatables were eagerly consumed, and the men and women went on their way, if not rejoicing, at least satisfied for the time being.

Greening related this story so many times that it is in some danger of becoming threadbare, but obviously it cannot be omitted from his life. "E. O. G." never forgot the incident, and often admitted that when he realised its inner significance it had a great influence on his career. The European uprisings of 1848 also exercised a great influence on young Greening and helped to shape his mind. He was twelve years old in that year, and passionately fond of reading. "I remember," he said on one occasion, "how I devoured the fast incoming news of the gigantic battles for freedom of Kossuth, Garibaldi, Mazzini, and others in the great struggles, and how my whole heart was involved in the issues of the conflict."

Warrington, which is about ten miles from Bedford Leigh, was his birthplace. There, according to an entry in the old family Bible, he was born on August 17th, 1836. Two nephews still live in the town, and one is a member of the Warrington Co-operative Society. The society in 1923 endeavoured to find the house in which Greening was born, with the object of affixing a memorial tablet, but the search proved fruitless.

When the family removed to Manchester, which they did in 1850, young Edward attended a Quakers' school in Mount-street, in a building adjoining the Friends' Meeting House. The building in which this school was held still exists, and is known as the Friends' Institute. Edward not only attended assiduously to his scholastic duties, he took a lively interest in the work of the Friends. Apparently he was in great demand in connection with the social activities associated with the institute; and, although a mere

stripling, he responded with the readiness that afterwards characterised every effort he made to help on a good and worthy cause.

His attendance at this school could not have covered a very lengthy period, for it is on record that he was a wire-worker's apprentice at thirteen years of age; but it must have been whilst sitting at the feet of his Quaker schoolmaster (Charles Clumber) that he determined to make the furtherance of the Peace Movement one of the aims of his life. Clumber's character had idealism as its basis. It is said of him that his one ambition in life was to teach those under his care the lesson of a noble life—to sympathise with the oppressed, to shoulder their own burdens uncomplainingly, to help the weak as opportunity arose, and find true pleasure in good and earnest work.

The story of Greening's experiences as a wire-worker, which he gave to the co-operative world through the pages of the "Wheatsheaf" in 1922, is that of a sensitive plant in uncongenial surroundings. His fellow workers in the main were of a rough and ready type. They were men who did not put bridles on their tongues when speaking in the presence of the young apprentice. "Conversations which I had to endure," he wrote, "were coarse, vulgar, obscene, and often blasphemous." He attributed this language more to the life the workers led than to anything else. They could not, or did not, make the effort which would have raised them out of their environment. They simply used the language which they and others understood. Many young boys during the recent war added to the King's English and their own vocabulary, but in the vast majority the desire to be rude or offensive never entered their minds. Had the wire-worker's apprentice been brought up in a different home, had he not gone to the Quakers' School, he might have been better armed to meet the rough usage incidental to the work-

shop. There is, however, this much to be said for his experiences—they gave him an insight into the life of the workers that was invaluable to him later on as a social reformer.

There is no need here to describe in detail the conditions under which the working classes lived in those days. The story is already familiar to all who take the slightest interest in the social and industrial history of their own country. The following quotations will supply all the background necessary to this period of the life of Edward Owen Greening.

Mr. G. M. Trevelyan, in his "Life of John Bright," making reference to wages paid in the early "'forties," states that :—"Men in factories were often paid 16s. and sometimes 20s. a week, and the women 10s. or 12s.; but the hand-loom weaver, working at home and paid by the piece and struggling against competition and the power-loom in the factories, did not earn on an average more than 8s. a week."

"E. O. G." himself, in his "When I was Young" article in the *Wheatsheaf*, says that "the hours of work were twelve per day, less an allowance of an hour-and-a-half for meals. Wages for boys were nominal, being mere pocket-money allowances. For men wages had risen to 25s. 9d. or 26s. per week for skilled mechanics, and about 18s. for labourers. Clerks got 20s. to 25s. per week." He there points out that the repeal of the Corn Laws, which became an accomplished fact in 1846, had brought down the cost of food, and that conditions of life were much better than those which obtained ten years earlier. "But the life of the workshop was on a very low level. The majority of the workers could not read or sign their own name. If they had to give a receipt they made a cross, which was initialled by someone more advanced in education."

The year after young Greening entered the workshop, as he did in 1850, Queen Victoria, accompanied by Prince Albert, visited Manchester, and her impressions of the people, as recorded in her diary, were as follows:—"Mechanics and workpeople dressed in their best . . . a very intelligent but painfully unhealthy-looking population they all were, men as well as women."

Bad housing—many then lived in cellars below the level of the streets—must have been one of the main causes of the unhappy state of the people. No wonder the public-house, which was at least warm, dry, and comfortable, had an attraction which the home did not possess. Speaking at a co-operative meeting at Leicester towards the close of 1878, Greening stated that "uncomfortable homes and no object in life often sent people to seek temporary relief in drink from work and wear. . . . Bring them into (co-operative) societies like this," he added, "give them a future, and they cannot drink because they have got to think."

It was his firm belief that the people would be healthier and happier if they made the publicans less prosperous, and he threw himself wholeheartedly into the movement which brought the United Kingdom Alliance into existence in 1853. He became a member of its executive, and took part in settling the terms of the Permissive Prohibitory Liquor Bill, which was introduced into the House of Commons on March 22nd, 1864, by Sir Wilfrid Lawson, the great temperance advocate, who also took a keen interest in co-operative matters, and whose brother William was the founder of a co-operative farming association in Cumberland.

Greening's oratorical abilities, which were so much in evidence in after life, were early in process of rapid development. He made his first public speech at an Anti-Slavery

Society meeting in Manchester. Unitarians and Quakers formed the bulk of the membership of the society, and they had sufficient confidence in Edward's organising abilities to appoint him secretary, despite the fact that he was only sixteen years of age. The chief business of this Society was to raise funds to maintain in the United States what was known as the " Underground Rail Road," a railway which had escaped slaves for passengers.

Greening, in an address which he gave at the Easter gathering of co-operators at Gloucester in 1922, explained the workings of this unique " rail road," which took the form of a series of stations established throughout the United States. What really happened was this : In the South a great number of slaves wishing for freedom endeavoured to escape. Later on, the Northern States, in obedience to the political interests of the time, decided that any slave who escaped to the North and was captured should be sent back to slavery in the South. It became necessary, therefore, if the Quakers were to help the negroes desirous of gaining freedom, to pass them from the States into Canada, and with this object in view secret stations were established, some twenty or twenty-five miles apart. If a slave wanted to escape he had to make his way, in the night, to one of these stations, where a Quaker would hide him until there was a favourable opportunity of passing him on to the next station, where the same process would be repeated. In this way the organisation managed to keep a continuous stream of negroes passing from slavery in the States to freedom in Canada.

It was on the occasion of the annual meeting of this society, when he was called upon to give a record of its previous twelve months' activities, that young Greening took a first plunge into public oratory. Describing this experience for the benefit of a few friends, he said : " I got on the platform

all right, but when I rose to speak to an audience of some two hundred people my heart seemed to sink into my boots and my ideas went floating into the air. How I got through the ordeal I cannot tell to this day."

It was through the Union and Emancipation Society that Greening first came into touch with George Jacob Holyoake. According to an entry in Holyoake's diary, they first met early in 1863. "I had known him before," said Greening in 1917, on the occasion of the centenary celebrations of Holyoake's birth, "though not personally." They met at the house of Max Kyllmann, "a young and handsome German merchant in Manchester, who was an ardent co-operator and who was financing at the time a cotton mill on copartnership lines." (This would probably be the Manchester Co-operative Manufacturing Co.) It was in this way that the comradeship in co-operative work of Holyoake and Greening began, nor was the tie broken till the death of the former in 1906.

Through his work for the anti-slavery movement, he also made the personal acquaintance of men like George Thompson, and by correspondence and reading he came to know Lloyd Garrison, Wendell Phillips, and other abolitionists in the States.

William E. A. Axon, who in his day was a frequent and valued contributor to the *Co-operative News*, records in his "Annals of Manchester," that, on June 2nd, 1851, a meeting was held in Manchester to consider the subject of "co-operative and associative labour." The Rev. T. G. Lee, of Salford, presided, and amongst the speakers were the Rev. F. D. Maurice, Mr. Thomas Hughes, and Mr. Lloyd Jones. Axon himself was a member of the committee which convened the Congress of 1869, and at that Congress he read a paper on "Co-operative Libraries and the Principles on which they Should be Managed." The Rev.

T. G. Lee also attended the opening of the Cobden Memorial Mills at Sabden in 1866.

It is not known whether Greening attended the Manchester meeting referred to by Axon or not, but the way in which he was developing, socially and politically, rather suggests that he would be present. He has left it on record that he was a member of the Manchester Industrial Co-operative Society in 1856, and that H. R. Bailey, who afterwards became chief clerk of the C.W.S. at its Newcastle Branch in 1873, was the secretary. "I came into the Co-operative Movement," he said on one occasion, "through the gate of comparative adversity." According to the *Co-operator* the Manchester Industrial Society was not formed until 1858, but there were two Manchester societies represented at the annual conference of delegates of English societies held at Halifax on Good Friday, 1868—the Industrial and the Equitable. Bailey represented the Industrial Society. Manchester was also represented at the Conference by a third set of representatives, but probably these were visitors. Alderman James Johnston, who has had a long connection with the Manchester and Salford Society, and who was also a member of the Central Board of the Co-operative Union for forty years, says that "so far as my recollection serves 'M. and S.' did not take over any of the assets of the Manchester Industrial Society, which was liquidated and went out." Some of the members of that society started a co-operative society (the Hulme Pioneers) in its old area, and it carried on business for many years in one shop, but was eventually absorbed by the larger society.

Between 1850–1855, according to some notes left by Greening, his father failed in business and decided to emigrate to Canada. The Canadian *Co-operator*, in April, 1923, stated that the year was 1855, and that on his arrival

in Canada Mr. Greening "founded the well-known wire manufacturing business of that name in Hamilton, Ontario, a trade with which the family has been identified since the days of Queen Elizabeth."

"E. O. G." was thus left with the responsibility of looking after his own future, and of some other members of the family as well. He was then nineteen or twenty years of age. Beginning in business on a small scale with one of his brothers, he, during the next nine or ten years, built up a concern, which, in his own words, "accumulated a capital that seemed to me at the time a small fortune and gave me a considerable income."

The formative period in Greening's life can be closed at this point. By now, it may safely be said, he had joined that band of ardent, hopeful, and enthusiastic spirits who did so much in their day for social reform. He had become a keen politician; to use his own words, he was "an advanced Radical." He saw in the maintenance of peace between the nations the best guarantee the world could have of the progress, prosperity, and general betterment of humanity. Temperance meant increased health and happiness for the people. Along the line of Co-operation the working classes could proceed to better conditions and greater economic power. He himself was in fair way to be a successful business man. He had also, at the age of twenty-three, taken unto himself a wife, with whom he lived happily for forty-seven years.

Slowly moves the March of Ages,
Slowly grows the Forest King,
Slowly to Perfection Cometh
Every Great and Glorious Thing.

CHAPTER III

BEGINNINGS OF MODERN CO-OPERATION

Co-operation Before 1844—Greening and the Rochdale Pioneers—Dividend on Purchase—Gladstone and Co-operation—Tribute to the Men of Rochdale—The Magna Carta of Co-operation—The Industrial and Provident Societies Act, 1852.

THE Co-operative Movement was growing up as well as Edward Owen Greening. There were stores of a co-operative character in existence even before he was born, and a few of these have outlived him. The Lennoxtown Victualling Society, in Stirlingshire, although not registered until 1864, was formed so far back as 1812. Another society, at Sheerness, established in 1816 for bread baking, is now united with another in the Southern Section of the Co-operative Union. A hundred years ago this society was selling water to the people at a halfpenny per pail! The Provident Co-operative Trading Society, at Meltham Mills, near Huddersfield, was formed nine years before Greening was born, but the sale of beer by this society in its early days (it does not sell beer now) would not fit in with his ideas of co-operation and temperance.

The Rochdale Pioneers, who had not enough money to buy a barrowful of provisions, but who yet set themselves the task of revolutionising the world, began shopkeeping on their own account in 1844. No Industrial and Provident Societies Act was then on the Statute Book, so their society

was registered under the frugal investment clause of the old Friendly Societies Act. The society justified its formation in many ways. It reduced the cost of living; it gave the people a pure food supply; and it developed habits of good citizenship amongst its members.

The Rev. Henry Solly, of London, at the opening of the Cobden Memorial Mills on October 6th, 1866, said " he was standing in the House of Commons when William Ewart Gladstone introduced his great Reform Bill, and he could tell them that the most eloquent passage in that most eloquent speech—the passage that made every Englishman within hearing thrill—was that in which Gladstone mentioned the 'Rochdale Pioneers' as evidence of the claims of the working classes to the franchise." The passage here referred to was the following:—" There is in my opinion," said Gladstone, " no greater social marvel than the manner in which these co-operative societies flourish . . . The bodies of men who must have had recourse to the system . . . have proved themselves to be the best qualified for the discharge of the duties of independent citizens." The Rev. Henry Solly read a paper on " Co-operative Organisation and Propaganda " before the 1869 Congress. He was the chairman of the council of the Society for Promoting Industrial Villages and did much propaganda for that society through the columns of the *Co-operative News*.

Greening was not present at the opening of the famous store in Toad Lane. In fact, he was then only eight years of age—" rather early," as he naively remarked on one occasion, " for a youngster to attend co-operative gatherings." But he did attend the opening of the society's new central premises in Toad Lane in 1867, and presided over one part of the proceedings. Later, he said " very much was I impressed by the meeting with the remnant of the twenty-

eight pioneers." He described Charles Howarth "as the most remarkable of all." It was Howarth who suggested to his colleagues the plan of dividend on purchase which is now adopted throughout the world as an essential feature of the Rochdale system of Co-operation. This idea came to Howarth in the middle of the night, and despite the protestations of his wife, who preferred sleep to dividends, he straightway dressed himself and went off to communicate his wonderful discovery to his fellow pioneers.

Apparently Charles Howarth had not heard of the Lennoxtown Victualling Society, which by its first rules had power under certain conditions to divide profits amongst its members in proportion to their purchases. The pioneers of co-operation at Meltham Mills also had the payment of dividend on purchases in mind when they started their society. In 1871 the *Co-operative News* published an article giving the names of its members, and the amount of their purchases and dividends for the year 1840, proving that this society had adopted the dividend system long before the Rochdale Pioneers had started business in Toad-lane.

Leeds Industrial Society began three years after Rochdale, and has grown to be one of the three biggest distributive societies in the kingdom. Another three years brought the Derby Society into existence. Halifax began in 1851 "in financial nothingness," as Holyoake once said, and was immediately followed by many others which still exist and flourish to-day.

The Co-operative Wholesale Society did not begin operations until March, 1864, but the idea of a federal institution purchasing wholesale on behalf of the retail societies had been discussed many years before. Mr. H. R. Bailey, then chief clerk of the Wholesale Society at its Newcastle Branch, speaking at a conference at Cleator

Moor, in Cumberland, in the early part of 1878, stated that " in the year 1856 a meeting was called by the Rochdale Pioneers for the purpose of arriving at some understanding upon the question of wholesale purchasing," and other leading co-operators, both north and south, were then considering schemes of wholesale purchasing. Doubtless all this co-operative thought and action was stimulated and facilitated by the passing of the first Industrial and Provident Societies Act in 1852. This Act gave co-operative societies what the Marquis of Ripon, at the Manchester Congress of 1878, described as " a real substantial, legal existence in the country." The Act widened the scope of development for co-operative societies to such an extent that it was called the " Magna Carta of Co-operation." After its passing the road was clear for co-operative progress in many directions.

Ever dearly must we prize thee,
We who find in thee a bulwark of the cause of men.
—WORDSWORTH.

CHAPTER IV

A FIGHTER FOR FREEDOM

The Civil War in America and its Effect on Lancashire—How Co-operative Societies Fared—"E. O. G." and His Work for the Negro Slaves—The Union and Emancipation Society—Co-operative Workers—The Manhood Suffrage League—Greening and John Bright.

LANCASHIRE writers found plenty of work for their pens in the two or three years following 1861, but they were telling of saddest thoughts. Samuel Laycock, whose poems reflect the patient sufferings of the people and their hopes of brighter times, described the conditions then existing with characteristic facility and feeling in his poem "Aw've hard work to howd up mi yed." One verse, typical of the rest, runs as follows :—

> Wherever aw trudge neaw-o-days,
> Aw'm certain to see some owd friend
> Lookin' anxiously up i' my face,
> An' axin' when times are beawn't mend.
> Aw'm surprised heaw folk live, aw declare,
> Wi' th' clammin' an' starvin' they'n stood;
> God bless 'em, heaw patient they are!
> Aw wish aw could help 'em, aw would.

To find the first cause of all this suffering one has to look beyond the confines of the county, outside the country altogether. Lancashire then, as now, lived very largely on cotton, and the outbreak of the Civil War in the United States soon led to the stoppage of supplies. Richard Cobden,

in a letter dated November 6th, 1862, wrote: "Bad as is the state of things, I fear we are only at its commencement. . . . It reverses the conditions of the richest county of the kingdom and makes it the poorest. . . . Few people can realise the appalling state of things in this neighbourhood."

In another letter, quoted by William Robertson in his History of the Rochdale Pioneers' Society, Cobden said: "I think I can perceive the salutary influence of your (co-operative) movement in the calm and reasonable demeanour of the population during these trying seasons of adversity."

Alderman Heywood (a former Mayor of Manchester), speaking at the annual soiree of the Bacup Co-operative Society in 1863, said "they suffered quietly, but they considered it was the duty of America to free the negroes."

Several co-operative historians have described the effects of the cotton famine on particular societies and the people generally, especially those of Oldham, Bolton, Accrington, and Rochdale. The strain on the societies was undoubtedly severe, but one and all came through with flying colours, substantiating the statement often made by Greening that in times of adversity co-operators find their best friends in their societies.

Mr. J. T. Taylor, the historian of the Oldham Industrial Society, states that "almost all industries, including the great machine shops, were crippled, and the workpeople were only partially employed." That was the first effect of the cotton famine. Gradually working hours were reduced, and in many towns work ceased altogether. It was found necessary, in order to prevent starvation amongst the very poor people, to inaugurate huge systems of relief. In Dr. Watts' book, which is regarded as the most authoritative on the famine, one chapter is devoted to Co-operation,

and the honourable treatment it received from the Central Relief Committee, of which Dr. Watts was a member. During the three years ending Lady Day, 1864, the Guardians expended in the relief of the poor £1,937,928, and the local committees another £1,372,454—a total of £3,310,382. In 1861, the Guardians only spent £313,135! There were many predictions that the Industrial Society would not stand the strain, but all were falsified by the fact that "its business actually grew." The membership of the Rochdale Pioneers' Society did decrease from 3,900 in 1861 to 3,501 in 1862; but in 1863 it rose to 4,013, and in 1864 to 4,747. Sales in 1861 were £176,206, but they fell to £141,074 in 1862. They went up again to £158,632 in 1863, and were £174,937 in 1864.

Greening was up and doing in this hour of trial not only for Lancashire but for the country generally. In a short autobiographical sketch he wrote some years before he died he mentioned the various movements in which he had been engaged up to this time, and he proceeded: "The most important of all in its effects upon my public life and work was the war of the Secession in America," which not only led to the cotton famine in Lancashire, but also "to much commercial and political disturbance throughout England." A party arose, he went on to say, "determined to force Great Britain to recognise the Southern slave confederacy, with the almost certain result of war between our country and the North." He quickly ranged himself on the side of those who stood for the freedom of the slave, a fact which is not at all surprising, in view of the work he had previously done for the anti-slavery societies.

Had Lancashire been influenced by material considerations it would probably have favoured the South in the struggle, seeing that it was from the Southern States that it drew its supplies of cotton. But the people of Lancashire

rose above these considerations and gave their sympathies to the North and the cause of freedom.

Greening took a leading part in the controversy which arose in England over the issues involved in the war. He wrote constantly and fearlessly upon the subject in the columns of the Manchester *Examiner* and the *Daily News*, describing, from his own point of view, the real issue between the North and the South. He journeyed up to London to concert active propaganda work for freedom and the North with friends who were forming an Emancipation Society in the Metropolis. Finally, he became one of the founders and one of the two honorary secretaries of the Union and Emancipation Society of Manchester. This society lasted throughout the war and "prevented England from entering into collusion with the slave owners in the South."

The Union and Emancipation Society, to quote Greening's own words, "was closely allied to the Co-operative Movement, almost all the leading co-operators being on the side of the North and freedom." Some qualification of this statement appears to be necessary. John C. Edwards, who shared with Greening the secretarial duties of the society, stated in a letter to the *Co-operative News* (May 29th, 1875) that when Abraham Greenwood, at a conference at Middleton in 1862, suggested "Wholesale Federal Agency" as a name for the C.W.S., someone asked him what he meant by "Federal." Greenwood illustrated his proposal by a reference to the United States, whereupon "a fierce debate arose on the American war, in the midst of which the object of the meeting was almost forgotten."

Edwards' memory is not so green and fresh in co-operative circles to-day as it deserves to be, considering the amount of work he did for the Movement in his own time and generation. Edwards, according to "E. O. G.," "was a little man with a bullet-shaped head and a very

determined disposition." He had a curious way of drawing in his breath before he spoke, but he was always worth listening to. He was a tireless missionary who travelled night after night lecturing on Co-operation; and he must have been the means of establishing a great many small societies. Edwards was the first secretary and cashier of the Co-operative Wholesale Society, but resigned that position in 1868. Other co-workers with Greening were Edward Hooson (one of the first C.W.S. directors), Ernest Jones (the well-known Chartist leader), and T. B. Potter, than whom Rochdale has never had a worthier representative in Parliament.

Another well-known co-operator connected with the Union and Emancipation Society was Dr. John Watts, referred to above. Watts, who was a Manchester man, was an old Owenite missionary, who, in the opinion of no less an authority than George Jacob Holyoake, was "unrivalled as a writer and speaker on Co-operation." Very shortly before his own death Greening referred to Dr. Watts as a remarkable man, and gave him the credit for establishing in Manchester the first free library in the United Kingdom. Thomas Barrete was ostensibly the founder; he had the money and the goodwill; but Dr. Watts was really the inspiring spirit who brought about the first beginnings of the free libraries in Great Britain.

Addressing co-operative students on one occasion, Greening said of Watts: "He is really the father of what you now know as Consumers' Co-operation." As a speaker he was "exceedingly impressive," but "trembled all the time he was speaking." It was from Dr. Watts that Greening and others imbibed Co-operation. It is recorded in the "Annals of Manchester" that the Union and Emancipation Society was dissolved and its final soiree held on January 22nd, 1866. Greening remained honorary secre-

tary of the Society to the end, and in recognition of his services he was voted a testimonial and presented with a number of the Society's books. John Bright was amongst those who signed the testimonial. Three years later—at the 1869 Congress—Greening met William Craft, " a highly intelligent man of colour," who was endeavouring to promote co-operative farming among the freed slaves of the Southern States of America. What a meeting that must have been!

This dark chapter in Lancashire's history began to brighten in the May of 1863, when, on the 14th of that month, the first bale of raw fibres sent after the restoration of peace in America arrived at Farington, near Preston. James Haslam, in his " History of Co-operation in Accrington," noted this incident, and stated that " women wept over it and men sang songs of joy." The historian of the Bolton Society (F. W. Peaples) has recorded similar scenes in Bolton.

The *Commonwealth* (the organ of the Reform Movement) in 1866 published a series of articles under the heading " The Leaders of the People." No. VI. was Edward Owen Greening. A photograph of Greening was reproduced with the article. This portrait is that of a handsome young man, one more likely to be at home writing poetry for a hobby than drafting a prospectus for a living. One can imagine the Greening of 1866 doing many things, but it is with difficulty that one can envisage him driving home hard economic facts from the platform. Yet that he did almost nightly while the great fight for freedom lasted.

When the struggle in America was over the victory of the North gave a great impetus both to political and social progress in England. Greening with Ernest Jones and others helped to form the Manchester and Salford Manhood Suffrage League, which became the nucleus of the northern

department of the Reform League; and he went through the campaigns under John Bright's leadership which eventually forced the Government of the day to give the extension of the suffrage that brought the working classes within the pale of the constitution. When "W. H. B." wrote on Greening as a "Modern Influence" in the *Millgate Monthly* in December, 1907, Greening told him that he was quite a lad when his father took him to hear Cobden and Bright, and said both made "an indelible impression upon me." A picture of John Bright in "the very depth of his political unpopularity" was given to the readers of the *Co-operative News* by Greening in December, 1879. In Manchester during the time of the Crimean War, wrote Greening, "I saw a mob of angry men howling and hissing, shaking fists and sticks, and threatening with personal violence a stalwart Quaker gentleman who walked erect and unmoved in the midst of them. . . . The Quaker form was that of John Bright."

Probably the last book Bright read was Greening's own account of the Familistere at Guise, in his book the "Co-operative Traveller Abroad." Bright was lying too ill to write, but by the hand of his daughter he sent word how interested he was in the story. Yet he had "very grave doubts whether the system, splendid as it was, could ever be made generally applicable to industry." John Bright frequently showed his interest in the Rochdale Pioneers' Society. Distributing the prizes in connection with the Society's Science and Art Class in 1877, he stated that in his opinion the Society had been of very great service to the community. Because of his friendly attitude toward Co-operation Holyoake dedicated the second volume of his "History of Co-operation" to John Bright, "whose townsmen of Rochdale made co-operation a social force, and who is himself a friend of equity in industry."

. . He began
The mighty conflict, 'midst the callous sneers,
And pities of the worldly wise, who thought
Him mad for daring with such puny means,
To risk a "hopeless struggle." They knew not
The might of knowledge in a righteous cause,
Against the legions of the powers of wrong.
—ROBERT BUCHANAN.

CHAPTER V

GREENING AND THE "OWENITES."

Links with Robert Owen—Lord Brougham and the Social Science Congresses—Old "Owenites"—William Pare and His Work for Co-operation—The Co-operative Congress of 1869—Well-known Publishers and Co-operation—Lloyd Jones and Others—Anecdotes of George Jacob Holyoake.

THE link between Greening and Robert Owen was broken almost as soon as it was formed. Owen's active public career finished soon after 1836, the year in which Greening was born. Very little was seen or heard of Owen after that until the year of his death (1858), when he made a somewhat dramatic re-appearance. He attended the Social Science Congress held at Liverpool in that year; as also did young Greening. Lord Brougham, who was chiefly responsible for these Congresses, presided, and introduced Robert Owen to the audience, eighty thus introducing eighty-seven!

Let Greening, though dead, speak and describe the scene: "Owen came forward—a very old man with a feeble voice. He repeated, as if to himself, his own formula for regenerating the world. Owen described it as an educational formula. He declared that if children were trained according to his ideas in their earliest days, when circumstances were favourable to the development of fine character,

they would, when they became men and women, make perfect citizens and form a happy community. Lord Brougham saw Owen was not only tired himself, but that he was tiring his audience—he was always rather prosy. Brougham thereupon said, 'Very good, Mr. Owen; very good'; and pressed him down into his seat." This was the last time Owen appeared on a public platform. Immediately after leaving the meeting he was taken ill, and he died a few days later.

"Co-operators ought not to forget the debt they owe to Lord Brougham," said Greening at the Gloucester gathering of 1922. "It was he who really first sought to interest the public in the question of popular education; and late in life he welcomed (with all the wonderful eloquence he possessed) the Co-operative Movement. He had a gracious habit of recognising everybody who worked for the cause of social reform. I remember well the gratification I felt, when in connection with the Social Science Congress, he recognised the work I was endeavouring to do in my own way for the Association."

The Co-operative Union was at one time a subscriber to the funds of the Social Science Association, and many well-known co-operators attended its meetings, either officially or un-officially. Greening was amongst those who read papers before the Congress. His subject on one occasion was "The Present Position and Prospects of Partnerships in Industry." At another meeting he described "The Progress of Co-operation in England." Holyoake discussed "Industrial Partnerships" at the Congress of 1872; and Wm. Nuttall, then known as the statistician of the Co-operative Movement, took part in the discussion. Abraham Greenwood, according to Greening, "startled" the Manchester Congress of 1866 with his account of the progress of the Co-operative Wholesale

Society; but Co-operation ceased to be a prominent topic at these annual gatherings after the death of Brougham.

Lord Brougham believed "nothing is likely to have a more salutary influence on the working classes than the spread of Co-operation. It will enlighten them in the most direct and practical manner on the very subjects about which they continually fall into the most serious and fatal mistakes." The first part of Holyoake's History of "Co-operation in Rochdale" was dedicated to Lord Brougham with his consent, and he was ever a sincere supporter of all attempts to establish co-operative associations for trade and manufacture.

Greening became acquainted with a group of "Owenites" in Manchester through the Union and Emancipation Society. Later on, when he went to London, he met nearly all the remaining disciples and leaders of the Owenite Movement.

He found himself in the same office as James Hole, one of the founders with Lloyd Jones of the great Leeds Society. Hole was then a prominent advocate of improved housing for the people, and wrote one of the best-known books on the subject. At the 1870 Congress, held in Manchester, Pare reported that "Mr. James Hole, of Leeds," had placed in his hands 200 copies of his book on the "Dwellings of the Working Classes," for free distribution among the delegates. In addition, he was one of the founders, if not the founder, of the Yorkshire Penny Bank, and of the Yorkshire Federation of Mechanics' Institutes. His son Edward became Greening's one and only clerk, the two constituting the whole of the staff the Agricultural and Horticultural Association then possessed. James Hole was an old "Owenite." Another known to Greening was W. H. Ashurst, head of Ashurst, Morris, and Crisp, then a leading firm of solicitors. The Bank of England and other great corporations were amongst their clients. Greening

described Crisp as being a remarkable man in many ways. He threw his beautiful garden open to the public and welcomed them with such friendly notices as "please walk on the grass" and "please go where you like in these gardens and enjoy yourselves."

Perhaps a better known "Owenite" than any of those mentioned by Greening was William Pare, called by Holyoake "the first co-operative missionary." When Greening first encountered Pare in London he was connected with the men who founded and managed the business of Cassell, Petter and Galpin, then the biggest publishers in the world. Galpin was Pare's son-in-law, and several other members of the firm of Cassell were old "Owenites."

Inquiry at the offices of Messrs. Cassell and Co. led to the receipt of an interesting letter from Mr. W. W. Hutchings, who has been making researches into the history of the "House of Cassell." Mr. Hutchings says: "Its title at one time was Cassell, Petter and Galpin, and afterwards Cassell, Petter, Galpin and Co. So far as I know, Mr. Pare, the father-in-law of Mr. Galpin, was never a member of the firm. One of his sons held an important position on the staff for many years." There certainly must have been a co-operative "atmosphere" in this well-known firm of publishers in the old days. The *Co-operative News*, in 1886, published a report of a social gathering given by Mr. and Mrs. Petter and Mr. and Mrs. Galpin at the Exeter Hall. At this meeting, Galpin, speaking as managing director, referred to the co-operative character of the Company, and mentioned the number of shares (5,266) held by its employees.

At the foundation-stone laying ceremony in connection with a co-operative mill at Oldham in 1861, letters of apology for non-attendance were read "from Mr. John Cassell, the eminent publisher of London, and from Mr.

William Chambers, the no less eminent publisher of Edinburgh." "Believe me," wrote John Cassell, "I sympathise warmly with any movement tending, like that of your Company, to promote the independence, the virtue, and the dignity of the working classes." At a later date William Chambers said: "I look upon Co-operation as the beginning of a new era in social progress"; and his efforts to spread co-operative knowledge are well known to all students of the history of Co-operation.

When in 1869 Greening, who was then very much occupied with the management of the Agricultural and Horticultural Association, looked around for someone to take his place as honorary secretary of the committee responsible for convening the first modern Co-operative Congress, he consulted James Hole, asking him if there was amongst the remaining "Owenites" anyone with money enough and time enough who would be disposed to relieve him of the office. Hole at once replied, "William Pare is your man." Pare was out of the country at the time. He was in Norway looking after some ironworks at Eidsfoss in which he was interested, and where he had helped the workpeople to form a co-operative society in 1868. This was the first successful society of its kind started in Norway. Pare returned six months later, and when he was asked to take over the secretaryship of the Co-operative Congress he readily consented to do so. He represented the Eidsfoss Society at the 1869 Congress.

Andrew Pears (founder of the famous soap firm of that name) was another devoted disciple of Robert Owen. "There remains in the family," said Greening in his address at Gloucester, "the most complete collection of personal relics of Robert Owen to be found anywhere, even including the night-caps which Owen wore!" According to Greening, "Pears obtained from Robert Owen the recipe which kept

his soap in such good condition that even at the end of twelve months or two years it would not injure the skin of a child or sick person." These statements were brought to the notice of Mr. Robert Pears, who unfortunately knows nothing whatever of the matters mentioned. It is on record, however, that Francis Pears, of Isleworth, gave a subscription to the 1869 Congress.

Other "Owenites" with whom Greening was acquainted included Lloyd Jones; E. T. Craig, of Ralahine fame, who promoted good relationships amongst the peasantry on the farm at Ralahine by giving them a share of the profits; and Hansom, the inventor of the cab, now almost extinct, which bore his name. It is interesting to note that William Pare, speaking at the 1870 Congress, said that "in 1835–1836, during the builders' strike, he directed their attention to co-operation, and Mr. Hansom, of cab renown, who was then an architect and builder in Birmingham, strongly desired to take his men into co-operative union with him."

Greening's opinion of Lloyd Jones was that "he wrote the best, the most appreciative, and the most intelligent of the many lives of Robert Owen." "It was a pleasure to see him," said Greening. "He was an Irishman by descent —a big man with a fine head, a happy smile, and snow-white hair, surmounting a ruddy sunlit face. On the platform he was a dialectician of the first rank."

After Lloyd Jones, perhaps the most remarkable man connected with the "Owenite" Movement was George Jacob Holyoake, who lives again in the following little sketch by Greening :—"He was not a strong man physically. He looked rather frail and singularly aristocratic. He had a very handsome face and long white hair. His voice was rather weak, and yet he managed to make an audience of two thousand or three thousand people hear him, because he had cultivated the art of speaking distinctly. He con-

stantly gave this message to young men making their first entry into public life :—

> Learn to speak slowly;
> All the other graces will follow in their proper places.

Holyoake always followed out this idea himself. He never failed to see the humorous side of things, and that helped him immensely. I remember being down at his house when his wife engaged a new servant girl. Holyoake himself had a word with the girl, and when she told him 'she'd got religion,' he said, 'Very good, my girl, but do you sweep under the door mat?'"

I seriously believe that Christianity is the only foundation of Socialism, and that a true Socialism is the necessary result of a sound Christianity.
—Frederick Denison Maurice.

CHAPTER VI

THE CHRISTIAN SOCIALISTS

Character of the Men—Their Bond of Union—Self-Governing Workshops—What Present-day Co-operators Owe to the Christian Socialists—Legal Security for the Movement—Greening and the Christian Socialists—Industrial Partnerships—Formation of the Co-operative Productive Federation and the Labour Copartnership Association—Interesting Correspondence

WHERE did Greening stand in relation to the Christian Socialists? This is a question well worth discussing. They had much in common, but though both he and they were anxious to raise the status of the worker, their line of advance was not the same. The Christian Socialists wanted to help the worker; Greening wanted the worker to help himself. The Christian Socialists thought they could nurse the worker till he became his own employer and thus gained economic freedom. They gave unstintingly of their time and money that this end might be accomplished; and also ran the risk of losing their good name. But the call had come to them, and like the disciples of old they were prepared to risk all that life might be made happier and better for their fellow men.

What manner of man was their leader—Frederick Denison Maurice? What manner of men were his immediate followers—Charles Kingsley, Tom Hughes,

Edward Vansittart Neale, and John Malcolm Ludlow They were all thinkers and workers, men of the highes personal character, whose names bring to mind a favourit Biblical quotation—" I will make a man more precious tha fine gold; even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir (Isaiah xiii., 12). Individually, they were barristers, clergy men, poets, and writers, the bond of union being thei common determination to teach the world that co-operatio and not competition was the way of life.

They have been variously described. Some once re garded them as visionaries, men blinded by idealism to th stern realities of life. Others looked upon them as enemie of the State, as men who wanted to set the workers agains law and order. It was said of Joseph, " Behold the dreame cometh " ; yet had he not dreamed his dream, his brethre would probably have died of starvation. It is equally tru that if the working men of England had hearkene to the voice of Maurice and his colleagues, and had fait in the principle of co-operation, they would undoubtedl have straightened the path of industry for themselve and their descendants alike. But they failed, except in few instances, to make the necessary effort, and in the en much of the good work which the Christian Socialist succeeded in doing had no permanence.

There was nothing revolutionary about the Christia Socialists. They did not rail against the capitalist. The did not urge the workers to rise against their masters an take possession of the means of production, distributio and exchange by force. Nor did they say the old ord could be changed into a new between the rising and th going down of the sun. They said to the workers : " Sin your differences. Form yourselves into associations fo the concentration of your labour. That which you nee —capital—we will supply, and that which you lack—

market for your goods—we will find." What more could these men do for their fellows, unless they themselves commenced making and selling goods and giving the proceeds of their sale to those whom they wanted to help? The workers in their associations were left pretty much to themselves so far as management was concerned, and after paying a contribution to a central fund, to be used for common purposes, and interest on capital at 4 per cent., they were at liberty to dispose of the net profit in their own way. Hence the term "self-governing workshops."

Inspired by the Christian Socialists, workers of many types formed themselves into co-operative associations. Bakers and builders, tailors and printers, shirtmakers and even needlewomen began to co-operate, and their efforts to free themselves from the thraldom of capital by becoming their own employers at first received considerable support from a sympathetic public.

The prospects of success were so bright that many people were encouraged to believe the dawn of the Golden Age was at hand; that industry would no more be troubled with unemployment, strikes, and quarrels between masters and men. They believed the fight between Capital and Labour was almost over, and that the dream of poets and singers from time immemorial was about to be fulfilled. A number of the self-governing workshops by their continued existence and progress gave substance to this belief; but in 1891 the last survivor—the Framemakers and Guilders' Association, which was formed in 1858—ceased to exist and the dream was over.

The chief reason why the self-governing workshops could not live and justify the faith of their founders was the inability of the workers to sink their own differences. All wanted to be "bosses," and there was no true fellowship or common interest amongst them. "People came

into the movement," Judge Hughes said on one occasion " who had not learned that the root and basis of co-operative effort are obedience and self-sacrifice." A new tool had been put into the hands of the workers but they did not know how to use it, and the Christian Socialists were at last obliged to confess that this was so. They had sown much good seed on stony ground, and at length turned aside from co-operative production to form the Working Men's College, wherein workers could be educated and trained for self-government in industry and State alike.

But though their immediate hopes of emancipating the workers were not realised, the Christian Socialists did not live and labour in vain. They pointed the way to a new and better industrial order, and those who wish to follow in their footsteps can plainly discern in their teachings the cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night. Moreover present-day co-operators are deeply indebted to them for what they did to win legal security for the Co-operative Movement by promoting and securing the passing of the Industrial and Provident Societies Act of 1852, which gave legal status and security to co-operative societies.

The last of these knights of the modern " Round Table " was Ludlow—the man who boldly declared he would not attend co-operative conferences on Good Friday because he preferred to spend that day in church with God. Ludlow passed away in 1911. It was he who laid it down that " no society should be deemed co-operative which divides profits exclusively on capital." That is a definition of Co-operation which should not be forgotten, especially in these days, when many companies and organisations find it profitable to include the word " co-operative " in their articles of association.

The Co-operative Movement can scarcely hope to discharge its debt to Neale. " Co-operation owes more to him

than any twelve, I might say twenty men," Dr. John Watts declared in 1881 ; and in 1894, when he was dead, Ludlow said, " I do not think any man was ever so widely loved and trusted by the working classes as he had grown to be at the last. A life of such generous, such utter self-devotion I have scarcely ever known." Greening, like others, often described him as " the saint of co-operation."

But what was Greening's own line of advance? He could not, like the Christian Socialists, supply out of his own pocket the funds for running self-governing workshops. Nor did the admiration he had for the Christian Socialists blind him to the weakness of their plans. He determined to try another plan, that of industrial partnership. This he put into operation in his own firm of Greening and Co., which manufactured a wide range of articles, including railings, stable fittings, and emigrants' houses. It is said that Greening and Co. was the second firm in England to adopt the profit-sharing principle, the first being Henry Briggs and Co., a Yorkshire firm of colliery proprietors, which after introducing the principle in 1865 abandoned it in 1875. In the same year the *Co-operative News* (November 13th) quoted the following from the *Beehive*: ' In 1870, the industrial partnership of Greening and Co. Limited suffered shipwreck. Mr. Greening had left in it considerable accumulated savings, holding over £5,000 paid-up shares when the failure came. He was liable for an equally large further amount. Some time before, when aware that failure must come, he refused to sell his shares or reduce his holdings, as he held it to be dishonourable in such cases to shirk any part of the liability. Greening himself generously said the blame for failure was chiefly his in surrendering the work of giving estimates to others when the Company was formed. Looking back upon that disaster ' he saw no reason for saying that the partner-

ship of the workers failed in anything it could have been fairly expected to effect."

Other industrial partnerships which Greening was instrumental in forming included the Agricultural and Horticultural Association; the Cobden Memorial Mills at Sabden, near Whalley, in Lancashire; and the South Buckley Coal and Fire Brick Company in North Wales. He had all these irons, as well as Greening and Co., in the fire in 1868, the power stations being Warren-street and Albert-square in Manchester, and Parliament-street in London. The *Industrial Partnerships Record* was also first issued from Warren-street. Associated with Greening in one or more of these ventures, either as directors or promoters, were such well-known co-operators as Morrison, Hughes, and Ernest Jones.

The Cobden Memorial Mills were so named because of Richard Cobden's interest in Co-operation, and because he and his partners had some print works in the immediate vicinity. The weaving department had 400 looms, and the spinning mill 12,240 twist spindles and 15,720 weft spindles. The opening ceremony and the evening meeting were attended by 2,000 people, including many of the leading co-operators of the day. It was stated from the platform that the promotors wanted to raise £80,000 in £10 shares; that £60,000 would be subscribed by "gentlemen of social and commercial positions"; and that the remainder of the shares would be allotted to the workpeople. The Company was a member of the Co-operative Union in 1878, but it is questionable whether the Union would admit a similar undertaking into membership to-day. It is also probable that if Greening were still alive he would not run industrial partnerships on the same lines as he did when the idea first occurred to him. The writer of the *Commonwealth* article (1866) referred

to these "co-operative experiments" as "mercantile speculations." Greening had youth, genius, and experience to back him, and "ought not to surrender the glorious prospect of a patriotic career for the sordid advantage of mere money making."

Another writer about the same time characterised the industrial partnerships "as bordering on co-operation," which is perhaps the best description.

Greening may have had the worker in mind when forming these companies, but the abbreviated prospectuses suggested that the shareholder was to have the first and biggest bite of the profits. The proportion aimed at was generally 10 per cent. for the shareholders, and 5 per cent. on wages for the workers. "Make every man about your companies personally interested in their success," Greening said at the 1867 Social Science Congress. "Excessive profits will be curtailed but the average dividend will range vastly higher."

The shares in the South Buckley Company were of the same value as those in the Cobden Mills Company, and a thousand were reserved for the workpeople. There is no reference in the prospectus to the workers being represented on the board of management, and the apportionment of the shares made it impossible for Labour to be the predominant partner. The shares in both cases could be paid for in the usual way—by instalments, but shares £10 in value are not within easy reach of the working classes, not even to-day, when conditions are better than in 1868.

The impression one gets of Greening at this time is that of a man trying to graft commerce on to Co-operation. "Give me of your best," one can imagine him saying to the workers, "and I will not forget you when the profits are being divided." There is also the further suggestion that a share in the profits was dependent upon the utmost effi-

ciency in the workshop and maximum production. The spirit of the Christian Socialists did not, it is to be feared, live in Greening at this particular period of his life.

He got on to firmer co-operative ground later by helping to form and develop that type of industrial partnership which is perhaps best represented by the societies forming the Co-operative Productive Federation. The Federation was brought into existence in 1882. The men who constituted its first and only individual members were :— Edward Vansittart Neale, Joseph Greenwood, Ellis Armitage, George Newell, John Hartley, Edwin Waceliter, and Edward Owen Greening. Their object was to promote unity of action amongst the societies and members of the Federation ; to secure capital for their use ; and to open up markets for the sale of their goods. The productive societies do not all work on the same plan, and all may not be members of the Federation, but all the workers engaged do share to some extent in the profits, capital, and control of the business in which they are employed.

Another association which Greening helped to form was the Labour Association, which had for its object the promotion of co-operative production based on the co-partnership of the workers. The first step in the formation of the Association was taken at Derby at the time of the 1884 Co-operative Congress. Delegates to the Congress were invited to a conference convened by the Co-operative Productive Federation, and this gave birth to the Association. It was decided to form a Propagandist Committee, and a propagandist fund, and it was to be the work of the committee to " arouse working men and public opinion generally to the importance of the movement for making workers everywhere partners in their workshops, both as regards profits and shares." A General Committee was also formed, " with power to invite leading co-operators,

trade unionists, and friends of Labour to join them." About one hundred of those present signified their willingness to serve on such a committee.

The General Committee met a day or two later, and appointed the following as the first Executive Committee: E. V. Neale, Lloyd Jones, Edward Owen Greening, Harold Cox, Bolton King, and Edward W. Greening. The Executive was to be located in London, whilst it was provided that "the business part of the Federation should be still done in Yorkshire (at Hebden Bridge) as heretofore.' Bolton King was appointed honorary secretary, and E. W. Greening honorary treasurer. It was decided that the subscription to begin with should be 1s. a year, "so as to open the door to the poorest worker whose heart is stirred to join the movement." Neale drafted model rules for the productive societies, and these were approved by the Executive Committee. Subsequently Henry Rowley (a former president of one of the Sheffield co-operative societies) was appointed secretary. One of the tasks of the Executive was to conduct "correspondence with foreign productive societies and associations."

Appeals were issued to "persons favourable to our movement," co-operators, trade unions, and other organised bodies; but the committee in their first annual report said the response had "not been so liberal as the committee might have expected; but the canvass has proved that there is sufficient good material to form the basis of a great national movement." The first conference was held at Hebden Bridge in the January of 1885, under the auspices of the Labour Association, the Airedale District of the Co-operative Union, and the local co-operative productive and distributive societies. Representatives from the Central Board, the Co-operative Wholesale Society, the Co-operative Insurance Society, and the Leeds Trades Council

were amongst those present. M. E. Sadler (Barnsley) presided, and E. V. Neale read a paper entitled "The Labour Association: Its Principles, Aims, and Methods." The conference approved the aims and methods of the Association, and recommended that "every effort should be made to obtain support from all persons interested in the salvation of Labour."

Aneurin Williams, who has done so much for co-operation in many ways, became identified with the Association at a later period, and he had as colleagues Henry Vivian, Thomas Blandford (whose early death deprived the co-operative movement of an ardent and inspiring advocate), and Fred Maddison. The Association enlarged its title in 1903 and became the Labour Copartnership Association.

The latest annual report of the Association makes appropriate reference to the passing of Greening, "a founder of the Association in 1884, and ever since one of its most devoted and valued supporters." He was chosen president in 1893 and then vice-president, and was a member of the Executive. This report also states that the problem of good relations between employers and employed "has now happily captured public interest to a wonderful extent." The Co-operative Productive Federation has also placed on record its appreciation of Greening's "self-sacrificing efforts for the cause of co-operative copartnership."

Many people are still under the impression that Judge Hughes had something to do with the formation of the Labour Association, indeed Holyoake said as much in his "History of Co-operation." Professor John, of Innsbruck (Austria), in July, 1893, wrote to Dr. J. James Bonar (vice-president of the Labour Copartnership Association), asking if the Labour Association was actually founded by the Christian Socialists, and if it were not merely the continuation of their Association of 1852 "for promoting

industrial and provident societies," for he found no trace of the dissolution of the said Association.

Mr. Bonar wrote to Judge Hughes, who answered on the 27th July, 1893, saying :—

> I know nothing of the Labour Association of 1884 except from notices of its doings in the papers, not even whether it professes Christianity or not. It was not founded by the Christian Socialists of 1850, most of whom are dead ; and Mr. Neale and I (who were the only two left who were still in the Labour Movement) were fully occupied with the Co-operative Union, of which he was General Secretary, and I Chairman of the Southern branch. Mr. Ludlow had became Registrar of Friendly Societies, so could no longer take active part in promoting associations. The Association for Promoting Industrial and Provident Societies was never dissolved, but was allowed practically to sink into abeyance after the Industrial Societies Act was passed, and the centre of the movement had passed to the North.

Mr. Bonar also wrote to Greening under date October 18th, 1922, informing him of Professor John's request and sending him a copy of Judge Hughes' letter. He also stated : " I am surprised at the contents of Hughes' letter for I had always thought Judge Hughes one of the founders of the Labour Association. You are, I think, the only survivor of them, and I venture to ask for your recollections on the matter."

Greening replied to Mr. Bonar on the 19th October, 1922, as follows :—

> Your inquiry recalls interesting memories. Judge Hughes was quite right in his reply to you in July, 1893, but his letter did not give you all the information you wanted. At the time the Labour Association was founded in 1884, Judge Hughes had half-dissevered himself from the lead in our ranks, which he had previously held. He had led us in the struggle to get copartnership incorporated in the programme of the Co-operative Wholesale Society and of the retail distributive societies. We had carried the Congress with us, but the C.W.S. and most of the stores simply ignored the Congress resolutions. Judge Hughes thereupon wanted to move Congress to

expel the C.W.S. from the Co-operative Union. He was always a brave fighter and ready to carry the contest to a decisive issue. I knew more, however, of the internal conditions of the movement in the North, where I had lived, than Judge Hughes could know, and I discountenanced the proposed resolution of expulsion. We should have been hopelessly outvoted on a division. The majority of the delegates were willing to vote with us for the principle of copartnership, but would have voted down a resolution to split the movement into two parts. Mr. Neale agreed with me and the resolution was never proposed, but I think Judge Hughes rather felt we had failed to back him up. At all events he took then the position of a "bystander" instead of a leader, and wrote to the *Co-operative News* under that title.

The alternative plan I had conceived was to organise a centre for the friends of copartnership, which would prevent them being scattered and the cause lost. We were up against an impasse, but we had coming into our ranks younger men than ourselves, such as Bolton King, Harold Cox, Thomas Blandford, my son (E. W. Greening), A. K. Connell, &c. By organising ourselves we could provide a rallying ground for these and others. Mr. Neale approved and agreed to join us but could not give much time to help as he was acting General Secretary of the Co-operative Union at the time. But at my request he wrote our first declaration and sent a message of sympathy to the meeting I convened at the Derby Congress, where the new Association was founded. I did not feel that we could ask Judge Hughes, as matters stood, to join in the new departure. I feared to have a refusal and thought it better to wait. Ultimately he joined after the Association had been some time at work. So did Mr. Ludlow and pretty well all the Christian Socialists who remained alive and were known.

The Association can only be called the successor of the Christian Socialist movement in the sense in which a plant springing up from seed sown is the successor of the parent plant. I and others who formed the Association owed our inspiration to Judge Hughes and his colleagues, and took the only course which was open to us at the time to arrange for the continuance of their work. Time has, I think, justified our efforts.

The author is indebted to Mr. Bonar for a copy of this important correspondence, which is now published for the first time.

I said to him that in this field (rural supply) there is more need for honest co-operation than in any other.

—"E. O. G." to Thomas Hughes.

CHAPTER VII

"ONE AND ALL"

A Call to London—The Task of Rural Supply—Co-operation as a Remedy—Formation of "One and All"—The Trade Mark Difficulty—A Happy Inspiration—Early Progress—Compulsory Education for Members—International Trading—The End of "One and All."

THE immediate cause of Greening's departure from Manchester to London in 1868 was the formation of the Agricultural and Horticultural Association, of which he was the managing director from first to last. How the Association came to be formed was described in an article which Greening himself wrote for *One and All Gardening* in 1915, and in an interview which a representative of *Garden Life* had with him in 1911.

When Greening was living at Manchester Judge Hughes used to stay with him very frequently, and in the genial atmosphere created by mutual interests their early acquaintance ripened into lasting friendship. They were on one occasion travelling together in North-East Lancashire, speaking at meetings of different co-operative societies. In conversation, says Greening, "I unburdened my mind to him respecting the scandalous evils of rural supply." He told Hughes of the frauds and adulterations, the corruptions and overcharges, which constituted nothing less than a

public scandal. He also pointed out that in this field there was more need for honest co-operation than in any other. The idea appealed to Hughes, and he asked Greening to send him details which he could lay before Cowper Temple (the stepson of the famous Lord Palmerston), and added, " if he approves the project, we shall put it through."

Cowper Temple promptly welcomed the idea, and at Hughes' request Greening went up to London and formed a council of seven to start the new association by securing the adhesion of four others, including Edward Vansittart Neale and Walter Morrison, then Member of Parliament for Plymouth. The sympathy and support of James Beal, the leader of the movement which resulted in the establishment of the London County Council, and Frederick Pennington, " an East India merchant of distinction and wealth," whom Greening had known in Manchester, were also enlisted. Altogether, just over £400 was raised without difficulty to start the Association.

" Soon after we started," says Greening, " the state of the seed trade engaged our attention, and the practices we found were so gross that we secured the appointment of a Parliamentary Committee of Inquiry, with Walter Morrison, who was still our counsellor, as one of its members."

In an interesting paragraph in one of his articles in the *One and All Annual* Greening described how the Association came to adopt its well-known trade mark, " One and All." The Council had unfortunately registered the Association under the title of " The Agricultural and Horticultural Association Limited," which Holyoake said was sufficiently heavy to sink a ship. What was wanted was a title that would compensate by its brevity for the length of the registered name. It was Morrison who had the happy inspiration to suggest " One and All." His connections with Plymouth probably brought this old Cornish motto to his

mind. Anyhow, the suggestion was at once adopted, and it was left to Greening to work out the details.

At the Birmingham Congress in 1871 it was reported that the Association was doing a business of £1,000 a week. It was also reported that the papers of the Association had been officially applied for by the Prussian and Austrian Ministers of Agriculture.

The report of the 1872 Congress stated that the Association had more than 500 agriculturists as members, and that an equal number of Lincolnshire farmers were members of a union allied to the parent association. The Association not only supplied its members with oil cake and foodstuffs for cattle, farm and garden seeds and agricultural implements, but also with coal from Briggs' co-operative collieries and groceries from the North of England Co-operative Wholesale Society.

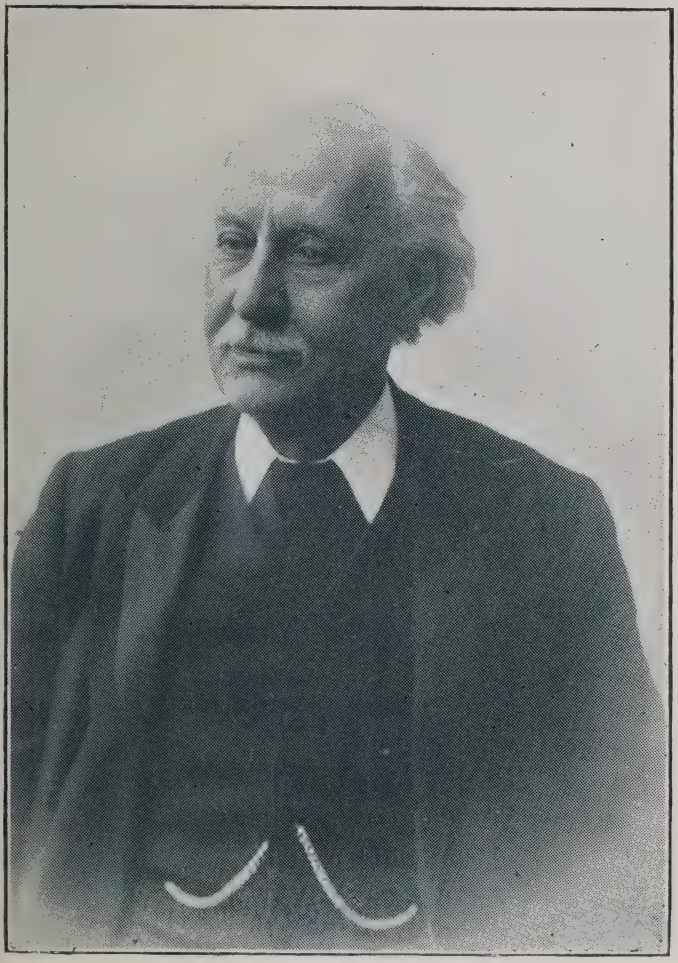
The Association believed in compulsory education for its members. Every new member was supplied with a copy of the Association's journal, *The Agricultural Economist*, and had the cost thereof deducted from his share of the profits. The Association had been nearly wrecked in its early days by the votes of ignorant members, and the object of this compulsory education was to prevent a repetition of this danger. Holyoake never tired of making a similar suggestion in regard to the *Co-operative News* and new members of distributive societies with the same object in view, but so far effect has not been given to his admirable suggestion.

The Association soon developed a world-wide trade. When the question of inaugurating a system of international exchange between the co-operators of England and those of the Mississippi Valley was before the 1875 Congress (London), Greening stated that the Association was already doing a direct trade with the Mississippi Valley. "So far as the

homeland is concerned," he added, " the Association has done all in its power to aid all good movements for arresting rural decay and restoring rural prosperity."

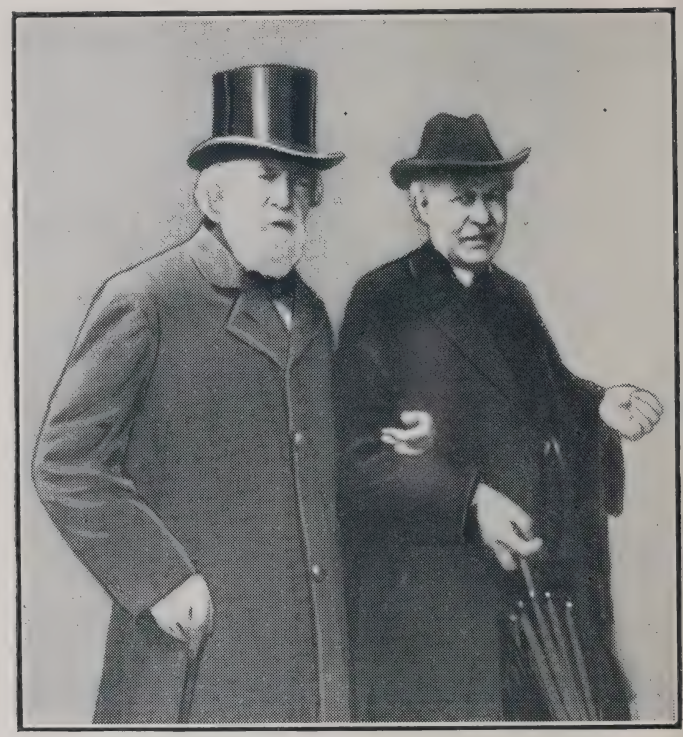
A battle royal was fought over the affairs of the Association in the correspondence columns of the *Co-operative News* in 1887. Ben Jones led the attack on its administration, and his charges were met, mainly by Greening, but on one or two points by Neale also. The only fact that need be quoted here is that in one of his letters Greening stated: " In the great agricultural disaster of 1878-9 the Association lost over half its share capital, and in the collapse of some co-operative societies which it sought to help it lost a further amount."

The " One and All " organisation continued for several years, and for some time appeared likely to develop into a really powerful organisation; and its end in 1915 was no doubt hastened by war-time difficulties, which brought disaster to many other promising ventures.



EDWARD OWEN GREENING.

(A portrait taken about 1905.)



[From a photograph by W. H. Brown.]

E. O. GREENING AND G. J. HOLYOAKE.

This picture has been made from a photograph taken as Greening and Holyoake were leaving the Congress Hall after the Congress held at Cardiff in 1900. Greening was then 64 years old.

Large streams from little fountains flow,
Tall oaks from little acorns grow.
—DAVID EVERETT.

CHAPTER VIII

GREENING AND THE CO-OPERATIVE WHOLESALE SOCIETY

Greening's Interest in the C.W.S.—Profit-Sharing—The Co-operative Bank—Co-operators and the Manufacture of Tobacco—Commercial and Moral Issues—The Manchester Ship Canal—Opening of the London Wholesale—Greening's Initiative.

GREENING'S interest in the Co-operative Wholesale Society was greater than his influence on its policy and business development. He proposed many things; but in only one or two instances had they any permanency. There is very little of his handiwork to be seen in the society to-day. In the old days his two pet subjects were, first, the right of its workers to a share of the surplus, and, secondly, the necessity for a separate legal existence for its banking department.

He won the first round in the "bonus to labour" fight in 1872 by inducing the shareholders to accept his proposal. Later on, he and others had an idea of making each worker an individual partner in the Wholesale Society. An alteration of rules was required to permit of this being done, and to avoid this alteration it was suggested, as stated in "The Story of the C.W.S.," that the society's various workshops and factories should be registered as separate organisations in membership with the society. The C.W.S. under this

arrangement would be mainly responsible for financing the works, and would also appoint the manager and retain the general control; the workers' share under the scheme was to be half the surplus realised.

The directors of the Wholesale could not see their way to accept this rather strange proposal, and said so at the quarterly meeting held in December, 1874. They then reported that "in consequence of the great increase in business and other circumstances, we are unable to say satisfactorily to what extent it (the payment of bonus) has had a beneficial effect." They therefore recommended that the scheme then in operation should be continued, but in a revised form. The shareholders accepted the recommendation, but requested the directors to make their proposals more definite at a future meeting. In June, 1875, it was decided (on the recommendation of the committee) to stop paying the bonus to labour. Bonus was re-introduced in 1882, and finally discontinued in 1886. In 1891 the Norwich Society revived the idea of employees sharing in profits by asking the directors "to prepare or obtain plans" for carrying out Congress resolutions on this subject, but the society's resolution was defeated by 572 votes to 223 votes.

Greening had no voice in this decision, unless he spoke through his son (E. W. Greening), who favoured the proposal. This was the last attempt the "bonus to labour" school made to capture the consumers' citadel, but it can still be argued that the society's employees are receiving a share of the profits through its contribution to their thrift fund. The contribution for 1922 amounted to £41,000, a sum not to be despised.

Greening also found himself on the losing side on the banking question. He not only advocated that the Co-operative Bank should be separated from the society's trading departments, but urged that greater publicity should be

given to its accounts, in order that the shareholders might know where the surplus assets were invested. "Secrecy may be an essential part of competitive trade," he declared, "but publicity is an essential part of co-operative trade." Greening lost on both counts, and failed to secure much support for either of his proposals.

When the C.W.S. directors sought power to engage in production, Greening urged—and at first carried the shareholders with him—that the manufacture of tobacco should not be included in their programme, on "commercial and moral grounds." To-day the society is well established in the tobacco business, its turnover for 1922 reaching the enormous sum of £1,361,472, and few co-operators now question the morality of its dealings with "My Lady Nicotine."

Greening was opposed, in 1885, to the C.W.S. investing money in the Manchester Ship Canal, on the ground that the canal was purely a Manchester and District venture. The shareholders were against him on this occasion also. The directors were given authority to invest the money, and their judgment in making the recommendation has since been amply justified. In 1887 Greening questioned whether the directors had power under the society's rules to be "tanners and leather merchants," as this business was a new trade. In this matter he was supported by E. V. Neale. Apparently the directors found they had power; at all events, they went into the business, and are still in it, developing it as rapidly as circumstances permit. Greening, for the same reason, was opposed to the C.W.S. grinding pepper, but his opposition was overborne. He was at variance with the directors when they reported that they were going to manufacture cocoa, as in his opinion an existing productive society near London had a prior claim to the co-operative trade in this particular commodity. He was again in a minority,

and the C.W.S. pushed forward with the cocoa business, although until the productive society ceased to exist the Wholesale also acted as its agent.

Lest the reader should imagine from these events that Greening was nothing but a drag on the progress of the Wholesale Society, let it be stated that when the directors announced that they were going to begin manufacturing boots and shoes they received his hearty support, and that he had a great deal to do with the society opening its London Branch, which has proved such a tower of strength to the Movement in the South of England since its establishment in 1881. When the foundation-stone of this branch was laid in 1879 Greening drew attention to the social conditions of the people and the inequitable distribution of wealth, and said those present were witnessing the erection of a "true temple of industry." At the opening ceremony, at which he also spoke, he said the new branch marked the opening of a new era for the co-operative movement in the south, and his bold prediction has been amply justified by the progress made in that part of England during recent years.

Co-operation, as understood and practised by the Union, is the surest protection for England from those dangers to society and property which the democratic wave is threatening to bring on many other nations.—HUGHES AND NEALE, in the "Manual for Co-operators."

CHAPTER IX

THE CO-OPERATIVE UNION

Revival of the Co-operative Congress—Greening's Initiative —Forgotten Worthies—What Co-operation Stands For— Position of the Movement in 1867—Congress as a Movable Feast—Greening's Suggestion—The Guild of Co-operators— Its Aims and Objects

GREENING'S first move in the direction of forming a national union of co-operative societies was made in 1867, the year before he went to live in London. Societies were then growing in number rather rapidly, particularly in Lancashire, Yorkshire, and North Cheshire, but their only bond of union was the Co-operative Wholesale Society, or North of England Co-operative Wholesale Industrial and Provident Society as it was then called.

The Wholesale Society was not altogether keeping to the path Greening had mapped out for it, but he recognised that the financial and commercial interests of societies were safe in its hands. There was, however, need of a sister organisation, one which would not only help societies, individually and collectively, to develop their educational and propaganda resources, but would also watch over their legal interests and express their united views on national questions.

Greening was not the first co-operator to suggest the formation of such a union. Lancashire and Yorkshire co-operators were talking "about framing rules for guiding the Co-operative Movement in England," in 1851. A "Christian Socialist" expressed the same idea in the same

year, but much more definitely. "The best thing to do at present," he said, "would be to form a co-operative union." As a co-operator Greening was then only in his infancy, but when he took the matter up he did not rest until a national union, in the form of a Central Board, was an accomplished fact.

His first practical step was taken at a conference held in Manchester in 1867, but the *Co-operator* report of the proceedings is practically confined to the opening address of the chairman, Judge Hughes. Greening said at a later date that the conference represented both "the practical and ideal" schools of Co-operation. Among those present at this meeting were Edward Vansittart Neale, Walter Morrison, M.P., George Jacob Holyoake, J. M. Ludlow, Lloyd Jones, Professor Jevons, Rev. W. M. Molesworth, Rev. J. Page Hopps, Henry Pitman, and many of the leading co-operators and trade unionists of Lancashire. Ludlow contributed an important paper on "The Possibility of Making Surplus Funds of Trade Unions Available for Co-operative Production"; and a resolution was also passed in favour of the holding of a national Congress and the formation of a national Union.

The majority of the worthies present at the conference are still remembered in co-operative circles, but the good work which the Reverend William Nassau Molesworth did for the Movement when he was Vicar of Spotland, Rochdale, must have been interred with his bones. It is never referred to nowadays. Records show that he was one of the presidents at the Manchester Congress in 1870. He filled a similar position at the 1878 gathering, also held in Manchester, and preached a striking sermon on Congress Sunday on the subject of "Co-operative Effort." "I had the good fortune," he then said, "to be associated with the men who made Co-operation a great success, and

who stamped on it the character that it has ever since borne; and at a time when it was generally decried and derided I ventured to maintain that it was a good thing, and not a bad thing, and to predict for it a glorious future."

Holyoake refers to Molesworth in his "History of Co-operation," saying it was he "who, discerning in the early efforts of the pioneers, the prospect of social improvement, first suggested to them the advantages of obtaining the protection of the law for their members." Abraham Greenwood, generally regarded as the founder of the Co-operative Wholesale Society, once said they in Rochdale looked upon the Rev. Molesworth as their chaplain, and added "he was often called 'The Co-operative Parson.'"

It may interest the present generation of stenographers to know that Henry Pitman, in addition to editing the *Co-operator* and reporting the annual Co-operative Congress, taught co-operative students shorthand at Balloon-street, Manchester, in 1897. Judge Hughes referred to him on one occasion as a great authority on Co-operation.

The Reverend John Page Hopps was the chairman of one of the public meetings held in connection with the Leicester Congress (1877). He then stated that he was not there as a minister but as a student of Co-operation during the previous ten years. His view of Co-operation was that it stood for unity, honesty, and economy, for it had in a variety of ways helped to surround men and women with the right conditions for their growth and development.

Co-operation "down South" in 1868 was not nearly so strong as it was in the North. Greening, in his inaugural address at the Stratford Congress (1904), stated that in 1868 there was "only one industrial co-operative society in the neighbourhood of the Metropolis which could boast a degree of success." This society was the old Stratford Society. The society, which had been established about eight years,

had in 1868 a membership of 278, a share capital of £1,091, an annual business of £3,407, and it paid a dividend of 1s. 6d. in the pound. "These figures," said Greening, "will give you an idea of what we called an exceptionally successful society in those days." He lived to see this society develop through amalgamation with other societies into the largest distributive society in the United Kingdom, with a membership of over one hundred thousand.

Greening lost no time in carrying his Manchester idea into effect. In the revival of the national Congress his hand is seen in the fact that one of the preliminary meetings before the Congress held in 1869 took place at the rooms of the Agricultural and Horticultural Association on August 28th, 1868. He also shared with Walter Morrison, M.P., the duties of treasurer. The arrangements or Congress Committee comprised 107 persons (including two or three ladies), with Thomas Hughes, M.P., as chairman, A. J. Mundella, M.P., as vice-president, and William Pare as honorary secretary.

The Congress was held in the "elegant and commodious" theatre of the Society of Arts, on Monday, May 31st. Tom Hughes, who presided, stated that the last previous co-operative conference in London was held in 1852, in the hall of the Working Tailors' Association, and that it was due in a large measure to Edward Owen Greening that the meetings were being revived.

Hughes went on to say that the returns for 1867 showed there were 577 societies in existence, with a membership of 171,807, and that they were doing a business of £6,001,153, at an average cost of a little more than 5 per cent. on the turnover. E. V. Neale, in the preface to the 1875 Congress (London) report, quotes the Registrar's returns for the year 1867, which are practically the same as those given by Hughes at the 1869 Congress, with the pro-

viso that they only referred to England and Wales. "The figures for Scotland," it was stated, "would doubtless tell of equally satisfactory progress."

The circular of invitation to the 1869 Congress was full of encouraging statements. It stated that "the rapid growth of co-operation is one of the most remarkable facts in modern history"; that "co-operation is spreading everywhere"; and that "the success of the Movement is no longer doubtful." Yet Hughes, in his opening address, said "we are much where we were in 1852." The figures and statements hardly bear out his words, but he revealed his thought by the use of a homely proverb. Every society which started in 1850 and 1851, he said, "put the horse where it should be—in front of the cart." Since then "they have for the most part been putting the cart before the horse." Societies in 1850 recognised that their main object was to make men of their members and regarded the making of profits, the production of wealth, as only a means to this end. Since that time they had to a great extent "given in to the prevailing heresy of our day," and "treated the making of profits and the production of wealth as the end and not the means."

Greening took part in the chief discussions at the Congress, expressing his views on trade unions and co-operation, co-operative banking, and industrial partnerships. He was also appointed on the committee set up by the resolution adopted by the Congress:—"That for the better organisation of the movement a provisional committee be appointed in London to act in conjunction with the existing conference committees in the North of England and Scotland, and which shall also carry out the resolutions of this Congress and convene a Congress next year."

Greening could not attend the second Congress, which was held in Manchester in 1870, but he sent a suggestion

that Congress should be "a movable feast," so that it should be held in a different centre each year. Such a course might inconvenience some people, he said, but declared himself "convinced it would benefit the cause by diffusing more widely a knowledge of co-operation." His suggestion was adopted, and has been acted upon ever since.

The Central Board was brought into existence at this Congress. It comprised two sections, one for the London area and the other for the provinces. Greening was appointed a member of the London section. The provincial section included Scotland, represented by J. T. McInnes, of Glasgow, the editor of the *Scottish Co-operator*, and Thomas Borrowman, also of Glasgow, who was chairman of the conference held in 1867 which appointed a committee to make arrangements for commencing a co-operative wholesale society in Glasgow. The new Central Board were authorised to appoint a secretary, and agents to advise societies on legal and other matters, and to watch legislation as affecting co-operative societies.

The Bolton Congress (1872) decided to establish a central office and appoint a permanent secretary. Greening took part in the discussion on this proposal, but confined his remarks to the question of devising ways and means of raising the necessary funds. In the following year it was proposed that the sections should be increased to five —Southern, Midland, North-Western, Northern, and Scottish—and that representatives from these sections should form a United Board, which "shall be the governing body of the Co-operative Union, subject to the resolutions of Congress." Greening approved this plan, in support of which he spoke with force and vigour.

Moving that the next Congress be held in London, he stated that "there had been a wonderful revival of co-operation" since Congress previously met in London. The

results of the election showed that the Southern Board for the ensuing twelve months would include Edward Owen Greening, Thomas Hughes, George Jacob Holyoake, Lloyd Jones, John Malcolm Ludlow, Walter Morrison, Edward Vansittart Neale, Hodgson Pratt, and William Pare. At this same Congress it was also decided that "this Congress cannot regard any society as co-operative which does not divide profits with labour or trade."

It was at this Congress that the system of exchanging fraternal delegates with the Trade Unions Congress was first introduced. Holyoake moved—and the motion was unanimously adopted—that the Central Board be instructed to communicate with the Parliamentary Committee of the Trade Unions Congress on the subject. The Parliamentary Committee of the Trade Unions Congress agreed to the suggestion, and sent their first delegates to the Congress held at London in 1875. The two Congresses have exchanged fraternal greetings ever since, to the very great advantage of both bodies.

An outstanding event in the year 1877 was the formation of the Guild of Co-operators, but Greening was too busy with his Co-operative Institute and the Agricultural and Horticultural Association to take an active interest in its work. Indeed, he had been obliged to resign from the Southern Board for a time, owing to the pressure of other business, and was not re-elected for some years. Neale suggested the formation of the Guild at a Southern Sectional Conference, and a resolution of approval, moved by Ben Jones, was adopted with only one dissentient—a delegate who thought the work Neale had in mind could be equally well done by existing organisations.

Ben Jones saw in the Guild the best instrument for bringing into existence an improved and happier state of society. That was a large proposal. Still, the Guild had for

its object the strengthening of the co-operative movement in the South, and it did much useful work on this line for several years.

Under its auspices leaflets were distributed, lectures and meetings arranged, and deputations sent to trade and friendly societies as well as to working-men's clubs. Districts where no co-operative society existed received special attention. One of the annual reports stated that the Oxford branch of the Guild had despatched a co-operative missionary on a three weeks' tricycle tour, and the "experiment proved perfectly successful." The Oxford branch "found the missionary in funds, headquarters provided the tricycle and leaflets, and the Central Board literature." The result of this happy combination was that stores were formed in several of the places visited.

The Guild also sent out boxes of books to those who desired to study co-operation and kindred subjects. Nor did the Guild neglect the rising generation. A boys' club at Whitechapel was visited and its members taught the co-operative way of living, many years before any co-operative circles and guilds for young people had been established.

Within a few years the Co-operative Union (as it is now called) was firmly established. Its annual Congress had grown into a "very genuine Labour Parliament." It possessed a general secretary (E. V. Neale) whose "willingness and industry," as one delegate at the Halifax Congress (1874) observed, "were wonderful"; and also had an office in Manchester. The Co-operative Union has always had its headquarters in this Northern city, first in Corporation-street, next in Long Millgate, and afterwards in High-street, where it remained until Holyoake House, its present premises in Hanover-street, was opened by Greening in 1911, when he delivered a fine oration in praise of Holyoake, his old friend and co-worker in the co-operative cause.

Surely the wiser time shall come,
When this fine overplus of might,
No longer sullen, slow, and dumb,
Shall leap to music and delight.

In that new childhood of the earth,
Life of itself shall dance and play,
New blood in Time's shrunk veins make mirth,
And labour meet delight half-way.

CHAPTER X

CO-OPERATION UNLIMITED

What Co-operation Has Done—What Co-operation Might Do—Pleasure and Recreation—Greening and His Aladdin's Lamp—A Co-operative Institute in London—Lectures, Dances, Classes, and Music for the People—Greening as an Elocutionist—The Crystal Palace Festivals—Co-operative Gardens and Allotments.

THERE is no need to limit the application of the co-operative principle. Why should it be confined to the factory and the store, to giving good conditions to the worker, and saving a few pounds to the purchasing member? The Co-operative Movement has justified its existence by making these things possible, but it has scarcely entered into the pleasures of the people. It has provided educational facilities for the community in advance of public opinion; but of how many towns or villages can it be said that the co-operative store is the centre of life for the inhabitants?

Some societies have provided tennis courts and cricket and football pitches for their members, either on their own estates or on ground leased for the purpose, but their number is not at all commensurate with the size and importance of the co-operative movement. Every society should be able to run one or more choirs. Co-operative swimming clubs could use the public baths. There must be thousands

of co-operators who are interested in Nature study, yet they have to cultivate their interest and extend their knowledge outside the movement. The Wholesale Societies supply co-operators with seeds, but how many societies have procured allotments for their members? How many provide lectures on the best methods of growing geraniums or planting cabbages, or arrange flower and vegetable shows annually?

Greening's view of Co-operation included all these things. That is why he formed a Co-operative Institute in London in 1874, and organised the great Crystal Palace Festivals which did so much to brighten co-operative life between the years 1888 and 1905. That is why he published the *Agricultural Economist* and *One and All Gardening* annually, why he accepted the position of organiser in connection with the Vacant Land Cultivation Society, and why he wholeheartedly supported the Co-operative Summer School Movement. He often referred to Co-operation as an Aladdin's lamp. "Use it judiciously," he said, "and it will do everything for you."

There is some connection between the Co-operative Institute and the opening by the C.W.S. of a branch in London. Southern co-operative societies were interested in a Central Agency which had premises at 55, Castle-street East, in the West End of London. This agency had several well-known co-operators on its committee, among them being Thomas Hughes, Walter Morrison, E. O. Greening, James Hole, William Pare, Hodgson Pratt, and Edward Vansittart Neale. The agency did not have a very happy or very long existence, and the C.W.S. soon took over the stock and paid the agency a sum of money on the understanding that it would give up the wholesale business. That was in February, 1874.

The committee of the agency had a fine hall left on their hands, and Greening became inspired with the idea that it

might be turned into a Co-operative Institute. He approached the Southern Sectional Board, and at a meeting held on May 20th, 1874, it was resolved that " the plans for the Co-operative Institute submitted by Mr. Greening be adopted." An outline of these plans was published in the *Co-operative News* in the following July. It was there stated that " this institution has been established with the approval of the Central Board and the co-operative societies of Great Britain."

Members' privileges included the use of a reference and circulating library and reading-room, one copy of each issue of the *Co-operative News*, lectures " of a high character," debates on social and political subjects, concerts, and social gatherings (with dancing) during the winter. An additional fee entitled the members to attend " select " political economy, elocution, and singing classes, and enjoy the use of billiard and bagatelle tables. Refreshments of high quality (non-intoxicant) were provided at " prices to cover merely the cost." The annual subscription was £1 5s. for gentlemen and £1 for ladies. Members of societies in union with the Institute could be admitted to certain privileges " on specially advantageous terms." It was also proposed to send out lecturers to societies in union with the Institute and with the Central Co-operative Board " on payment of simple expenses of travelling."

It was made quite plain in the abbreviated prospectus of the Institute, signed by Robert Harper (secretary pro tem.), that the main idea of the committee was to spread knowledge of " social economy, political economy, and the principles of co-operation or mutual self-help." Harper had a letter in the *Co-operative News* (September 12th, 1874) stating that " the Southern Section of the Central Co-operative Board were the governing body of the Institute, and that they had furnished the funds to found it." E. V. Neale,

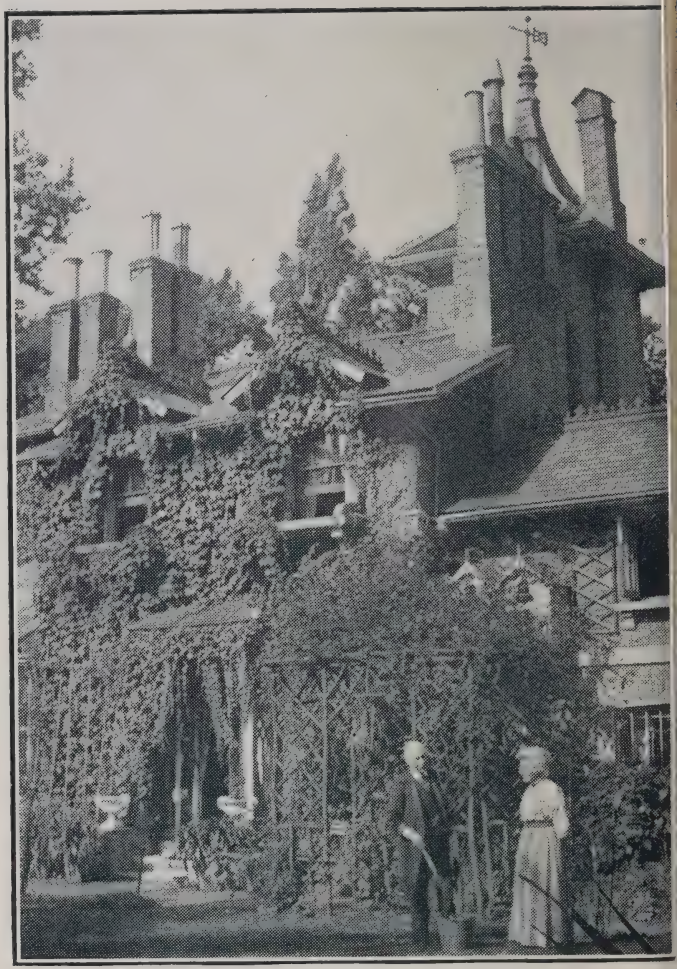
in a subsequent issue, pointed out that whilst the greater part of the Institute's funds had been furnished by members of the Sectional Board, the money had come out of their own pockets. Nevertheless, the connection between the Sectional Board and the Institute must have been very close, seeing that the Board accepted an invitation from Greening (July 22nd, 1874) to appoint a sub-committee to manage it. This committee elected as members of the Institute the whole of the Central Co-operative Board for ten years. This was probably the result of a subscription of £25 received from the Central Board.

The managers of the Institute issued a circular in October explaining the objects of the Institute, and this was signed by "Thomas Hughes, W. Morrison, and Edward Owen Greening." At the 1875 Congress it was reported that Greening had withdrawn from the Central Board in order to devote himself to the work of promoting the success of the Co-operative Institute.

The Institute was opened with a big flourish of trumpets. Judge Hughes delivered the inaugural address, and stated that the Institute originated in the mind of Greening, "who is always making valuable suggestions." In this address Hughes brought out a remarkable fact—that since 1869 four "especial wants" in the movement had been met. One was a central place of banking; another, a wholesale depot for the South; and the third a representative journal, the *Co-operative News*. The fourth "want" was educational in character, and had been met by the Co-operative Institute.

The first lecture delivered at the Institute was given in the evening, and at the close Greening "took everybody by surprise by his efficient delivery" of "The Conversion of Colonel Quagg," by George Augustus Sala. Mrs. Annie Besant gave her first public lecture at this Institute, although

MR. AND MRS. GREENING HAVING TEA IN THE GARDEN AT OAK LAWN.



MR. AND MRS. GREENING IN THE GARDEN AT OAK LAWN.

the *Co-operative News* in the same year recorded that a Yorkshire co-operative society (Masbro' Equitable) had refused to let one of its rooms for a lecture she was to give.

The spirit of the Co-operative Institute—that co-operation should enter into the pleasures as well as the business activities of the people—lived again in the National Co-operative Festival, which had its birth in an industrial flower show held by the Agricultural and Horticultural Association in the grounds of the Royal Horticultural Society at South Kensington in 1886. The show was held at the same place in the following year, with an exhibition arranged by the Labour Association as an additional attraction. Greening and his colleagues took advantage of the occasion to discuss " with our country friends " the idea " of uniting a grand national co-operative holiday festival with the flower show in future years," and a resolution of approval was adopted. In the following year the Crystal Palace was engaged for the festival, and a much more ambitious programme was successfully carried through. The flower show and industrial exhibition were then reinforced by choir contests and sports. Meantime the festival had become " national " in every sense of the word.

" When I initiated the co-operative festival," Greening wrote in the *Co-operative News*, in July, 1921, " I could not find in the whole movement a single choir. I had to go to the temperance movement to borrow the first choir which sang at the Crystal Palace. . . . Co-operators of all ages and both sexes had to go outside of the movement for their pleasures."

The festival was held annually at the Crystal Palace for twenty-two years, and the withdrawal of cheap fares by the railway companies was largely instrumental in making the one held in 1910 the last. The numbers attending the festival varied from 25,000 to 50,000 annually. The singers,

who came from all parts of the country, increased in numbers until there were over 6,000 entries. The flower show gradually extended until it reached the whole length of the Palace, and attracted over 4,000 exhibitors. Mr. T. W. Sanders, editor of *Amateur Gardening*, rendered Greening great assistance with this side of the festival, while Mr. Allen Gill was chiefly responsible for the musical arrangements.

Greening always managed to get some prominent leader to preside over these festivals, such as the late Earl Grey, the Countess of Warwick, or Sir Horace Plunkett. Earl Grey would have found himself quite at home with the Christian Socialists. His democracy was based on religion and co-operation. He wanted the democracy to take possession of the Church and make it a true Church really belonging to the people. "The religion of the Church," he thought, "would then become the religion of humanity." Grey saw in Co-operation "a cure for all the frightful mess which modern industrialism has made of English life." He was a warm supporter of the copartnership principle, and did not hesitate to criticise the "wholesale co-operative movement for its lack of the qualities which are necessary to stir the soul." At the 1898 festival he urged the co-operative movement to return "to the spirit of its founders," and show that it did not exist for mere shopkeeping and dividends."

Greening retired from the chairmanship of the festival in 1902, after fourteen years' administration, and was then presented with an address by the presidents of all the festivals held from 1887 to 1901.

Greening, supported by the Southern Sectional Board and the Labour Copartnership Association, attempted to revive the festival at the Crystal Palace in 1921, but their united efforts were not sufficient to bring back the glamour associated with the festival in its earlier days. The festival may

be revived when railway fares are cheaper and co-operative educational committees have more money to spend; but the prospects are not bright.

Greening was not blind to the amenities of town life, but never could see why the "per contra account" should be such a heavy one. No evil spirit created slums and smoke screens to shut out the glorious sunlight; they are simply the result of want of foresight and imagination in the building of our towns and cities. That was why he took such a great interest in garden cities and villages and town planning generally. He never lost an opportunity of attacking the system which created bad housing conditions for the people, or of appealing to the co-operative movement for support. "You cannot permanently establish a truly great empire upon a degraded population, cooped up in grim surroundings of bad air and crowded alleys, of dirt and ugliness," he wrote in the *One and All Gardening Annual* for 1901, so anticipating Lloyd George's warning to the nation that "you cannot have an A1 country with a C3 population."

Greening believed with Bacon that "gardening is the purest of human pleasures," the "greatest refreshment to the spirit of man." He also shared to the full an opinion expressed by Dean Hole in his delightful book about gardens, that "you can't do a poor man a greater kindness than by giving him a garden and encouraging him in every way to take an interest in it." He had a beautiful garden of his own at Lee, in Kent, and nothing gave him greater pleasure than to show co-operative visitors his shrubs, plants, and flowers, and the fountain beside which Holyoake used to write his entertaining epistles.

Had it been within his power, Greening would have left a garden to every working man, and a parcel of books also. When he took to his bed for the last time, and the end was

near, he said: "I have had such a beautiful dream of my garden. I wish I could realise it."

Addressing a co-operative conference as long ago as 1887, Greening said it was part of the duty of co-operative societies, and within their power, "to supply their members with the delights of a garden." Borrowing a phrase from Dr. Franklin, he said the road to the acquisition of a co-operative garden was "as easy as the road to market for the clear-sighted, business-like working man." He urged that societies should take a fairly extensive plot of ground, and before letting it out to members for allotments arrange how it should be developed as a whole. He had no use for fences except to mark off the flower garden from the vegetable garden, and in the centre of the flower garden would place a summer-house or "a nest of summer-houses," surrounded by a large lawn, to be used as common ground.

He pictured the wives coming to this delightful spot to read, knit, or sew, and the children to play, "all within sight of the happy father pleasantly at work with his spade or hoe." If societies could not make such a scheme pay a fair rate of interest, he suggested they should wait until they were sufficiently wealthy "to do a few things as tasteful luxuries or philanthropic essays."

Another idea of his to brighten working-class homes was the organisation of window-box competitions. "Every working man might not be able to afford an allotment," he said, "but very few could not spare the necessary coppers to add a little beauty to their homes." The meanest flower that blows is capable of doing more than giving thoughts that often "lie too deep for tears." It can mark off one house, or even one street, from its neighbour.

Nothing renews hope in the breast of the social reformer like a red geranium growing in the worst part of a slum. It is to him significant of much.

It may be stated without reserve that the International Co-operative Alliance is the offspring of co-operative idealism.

"YEAR BOOK OF INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION, 1910."

CHAPTER XI

INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION

Paving the Way for International Co-operation—Desire for Closer Relationship—The Congress of 1869—French Co-operators and the British Co-operative Union—The Profit-Sharing Controversy—Formation of the International Co-operative Alliance—The Alliance Firmly Established.

THE International Co-operative Alliance, in the formation of which Greening played a prominent part, was a "castle in the air" long before it took physical shape. The programme for the Congress of 1869 included among the subjects for discussion "The Forming of an Organisation of all Co-operative Societies and Co-operators at Home and Abroad," which, it was thought, would be one "of the best means of making co-operative societies mutually helpful."

The delegates did not devote much attention to the subject, probably because the programme was overloaded; but they had presented to them many reports from co-operative organisations on the Continent, which showed that co-operators abroad were desirous of establishing closer relationships with those of the United Kingdom. One correspondent, writing from Paris, saw in the development of Co-operation "the union of all nations upon earth." Another, in a letter from Algeria, suggested frequent Inter-

national Congresses because they would give the co-operators of different countries an opportunity of exchanging information and helping forward "the progress of Co-operation throughout the world." The reports also indicated that co-operative societies in many places on the Continent were being "established after the principle of the Pioneers' Society in Rochdale."

The development of international relationships received considerably more attention at the next Congress, and there was a general desire to keep in touch with our "foreign friends" by means of these "Co-operative Congresses and in other ways." This desire found expression in a resolution that "a friendly correspondence may be established between the co-operators in Great Britain and those engaged in the work of Co-operation elsewhere, so that they may be mutually encouraged and instructed by each other's experience and advice." Greening was absent from this Congress, otherwise his voice would certainly have been raised in support of these far-reaching proposals.

It is also worthy of note that at the Manchester Congress in 1878, a French society, of silk weavers at Lyons, was admitted an honorary member of the Co-operative Union. Objection was taken to this society being admitted as an honorary member, whereupon Neale said he believed the society was "quite willing to become a paying member." Hodgson Pratt, in urging that the society should be taken into membership, thought that this "might be the first step to international relations between English and French co-operative societies."

The next important step to be noted in this necessarily brief review of the growth of the international co-operative movement was the appointment of a Foreign Inquiry Committee by the British Co-operative Congress held at Derby in 1884. Harold Cox, who had been in communication

with French co-operators, speaking on their behalf, expressed a desire for closer connection with the co-operators of Great Britain; and the outcome was the appointment of this committee. In 1885, for the first time in its history, the Congress decided to send representatives to the annual Congress of French Co-operative Societies. At this Congress also Greening was appointed a member of the Foreign Inquiry Committee.

There were times within the next few years when it appeared that the plan of forming an International Co-operative Alliance would have to be abandoned. A serious difference of opinion arose amongst those interested in the project. Neale, Greening, and Holyoake in England, and several well-known Continental co-operators, wanted "the principle of Labour's participation in profits" to be embodied in the constitution or programme of the Alliance, but British co-operators who stood by the Rochdale method of distributing profits objected to this being done. The question was discussed with considerable heat at the British Congress, and, as matters seemed to be at a standstill, Neale, Greening, and Holyoake decided that the "International Alliance" must be called into being without the active aid of the Co-operative Union, which they considered was "under the influence of the Wholesale Society." They held a meeting at Rochdale in 1892, and constituted themselves into a preliminary committee for the formation of "an International Alliance of the Friends of Co-operative Production." Neale drafted an appeal for support, and Greening, according to Dr. Hans Müller in the first "Year Book of International Co-operation," took up the necessary propaganda "energetically."

In the following August a conference to inaugurate the International Alliance was held in London. Greening presided, and placed before the conference a constitution

which he had drafted. A French delegate moved a resolution that an Alliance be formed. It was also stated in this resolution that one of the objects of the Alliance would be " to establish industrial peace based on the copartnership worker." Other resolutions adopted provided for the appointment of a provisional council and the holding of a first International Congress of the Alliance in Great Britain in the following year. Greening was appointed to the provisional council. The other moving spirit—Neale—could not attend the conference on account of an illness, which caused his death shortly afterwards.

Greening invited Henry Wolff (an Englishman living in Germany and interested in co-operative credit and agricultural co-operation) to take Neale's place on the provisional council, telling him that the main object of the Alliance was to promote profit-sharing and co-operative production. Wolff thought this aim was too narrow for an international co-operative organisation. He said to Greening : " Extend the programme, make it embrace everything that is co-operative in any shape or form and I am your man " ; and Greening at once agreed to this enlargement of the constitution. Surprise at Greening's decision was not confined to Dr. Muller. It certainly looked as though he had given way on one of his set principles. Probably Greening made this sacrifice in order to placate those British organisations which would not join the Alliance while it adhered to its determination to include the recognition of profit-sharing in its constitution. The British Co-operative Union still held aloof, but re-appointed its Foreign Inquiry Committee at the Huddersfield Congress in 1895. This committee informed Greening and his friends that it was prepared to support their committee in organising the next International Congress on the condition (which Greening and his friends accepted) that the

Co-operative Union should be recognised "as the only legitimate representative of the British societies, and that for the present no binding decisions be come to regarding the rules of the Alliance."

The first International Co-operative Congress was held in London the following August, and the provisional committee, through Aneurin Williams, submitted a draft constitution for the Alliance. This draft consisted of twelve articles, the first of which provided that the Alliance should be formed of "associations and persons now or hereafter adhering to the work commenced by the late Vansittart Neale and his friends, to promote Co-operation in all its forms, taking for basis the principles of property, liberty, and participation in profits."

Ludlow moved that the reference to Neale and his friends be omitted and that the words "taking for basis the principles of property, liberty, and profit-sharing" should be struck out. Greening declared in favour of the alteration, an act which brought Holyoake to his feet at once demanding whether profit-sharing was to be eliminated altogether. An exciting debate followed, and it was finally decided to refer the article back to the provisional council, who amended it by leaving out the words "taking for basis," &c., as suggested by Ludlow, and it was finally adopted in this form. Greening informed Holyoake that he had agreed to the alteration because he wanted, if possible, to "bring the C.W.S. and the profit-sharing societies to a common understanding. For this reason, membership," he said, "must be made possible for the Wholesale Society."

That the principle of profit-sharing had been dropped out of the objects of the Alliance was confirmed later by Mr. Henry Wolff. Writing in the "Co-operators' Year Book" for 1903, and reviewing the proceedings of the Manchester Congress, he said that "practically speaking,

profit-sharing, at one time the main plank in the Alliance platform, has been abandoned." The sacrifice "to some of us" was painful, but it "removed discord and brought the Alliance unity."

It only needs to be added, so far as Greening himself is concerned, that he remained a staunch friend of the Alliance up to the time of his death, and Mr. H. J. May, the present secretary of the Alliance, said at the funeral service, "There is no doubt that Edward Owen Greening was a sponsor at its christening, and that its first statutes were drafted in the house from which we have just carried his mortal remains."

'Tis coming up the steep of Time,
And this old world is growing brighter;
We may not see its Dawn sublime,
Yet high hopes make the heart throb lighter.
Our dust may slumber underground
When it awakes the world in wonder;
But we have felt it gathering round—
We have heard its voice of distant thunder.
'Tis coming! Yes, 'tis coming!

—GERALD MASSEY

CHAPTER XII

THE RADICAL POLITICIAN

"E. O. G." and Politics—Candidate for Halifax—The Demand for Co-operative Representation—The Swansea Congress—Greening's Defeat—Co-operators and Parliamentary Representation in 1872—A Significant Resolution.

ADVOCATES of the direct representation of co-operators in Parliament always found in Greening their chief opponent. Whenever the proposal came forward, either in Congress or in the co-operative press, he never failed to go into the opposition lobby. No one could accuse him of inconsistency, for from the first he held the view that there was no place for a political party inside the co-operative movement. Every citizen should take an active interest in politics, he said repeatedly; but he held that co-operators who wanted to form themselves into a new political party were simply asking for trouble. Disturbances and dissensions, which were bound to interfere with the progress of the movement, were the only results that he could see coming from co-operative participation in national and municipal politics.

He had no objection to co-operators standing as candidates, but said the co-operative movement should refrain from identifying itself, either by use of its machinery or its funds, with their candidatures. If a co-operator stood as a Labour, Liberal, or Conservative candidate, the assistance he required should be given to him by the recognised

party organisation. The co-operative movement, in a word, should remain neutral; it should, as Greening frequently urged, "make friends of all parties, but be allied to none."

Greening never disguised his own political leanings. "I have belonged from youth upwards," he said on one occasion (*Co-operative News*, July 29th, 1922), "to that wing of the Liberal Party which regards it as the first duty of all of us to strive for the uplifting of the working masses, in order to redeem them from servitude." He belonged to that school of Liberals whom Stead nicknamed "Lib.-Labs." Their most distinguished representative in politics was the late Thomas Burt, who was always ready to lend a helping hand to Co-operation, either inside or outside the House of Commons.

The *Commonwealth*, the organ of the Reform movement, stated in 1866 that "when Edward Owen Greening enters the House of Commons, as we have reason to believe he will do at the next general election," he would render valuable service to all reforming movements. These hopes were not destined to be realised. Greening accepted only one of many offers to stand as a Parliamentary candidate. That invitation came from Halifax in 1868. In a "Memo. of My Life," he stated he stood at that election in the interests of Liberalism and Labour. At the Congress dinner of 1873, held at Newcastle-upon-Tyne, he said: "I was invited by the working men of that town (Halifax) to stand as a working-class candidate pure and simple."

It was a memorable contest, but it is difficult to say at this time of day how much co-operative support Greening received in his candidature. The historian of the Halifax Industrial Society, Montague Blatchford, does not refer to the election at all. "The year 1868," he wrote, "was almost equally uneventful," and evidently the society, as a society, was not behind Greening. "Veritas," in a letter

published in the *Co-operative News* (May 27th, 1876), stated that " the president of both (local) societies, as well as many members of the committees and shareholders, were actively and publicly identified with opposing candidates." But it can safely be said that there were co-operators supporting Greening.

Henry Jackson, who occupied a seat on the C.W.S. Board from December, 1874, to June, 1876, and who almost up to the time of his death (1921) was the head of the society's boot department in Manchester, wrote a letter to the editor of the *Co-operative News* replying to " Veritas," but there is no trace of its publication. Whether he changed his mind about sending the letter or whether the editor thought it unsuitable for publication are matters which cannot be determined now. The letter, which is dated May 29th, 1876, stated that " the co-operators of Halifax found they had acquired a power equal with the middle classes in sending men to represent the borough of Halifax in Parliament, and they thought it only right and fair that they should have a voice in saying who these men should be." A committee of co-operators was formed, and it at once got in touch " with the parties who had previously managed the elections." Apparently the committee did not get much satisfaction from these interviews. Its members were informed that " the parties intend to manage the present election as they had done others," and that " they had no idea of taking the working classes into partnership with them."

The committee, finding itself in this position, at once set to work to " bring out a man of our own choice," who proved to be Edward Owen Greening. He was invited to address a meeting of the electors in one of the largest rooms in the town, and by an almost unanimous vote he was chosen to be the candidate. This was probably his nomination

meeting, when he was described as "a gentleman well known as an earnest advocate of the co-operative movement, and a supporter of the Permissive Bill." The resolution adopting him as candidate was moved by D. Pickles, and seconded by W. H. Baxendale (secretary of the Halifax Industrial Society).

At the Newcastle Congress of 1873 Greening stated that there was no man on his side above the rank of town councillor, and that they could boast of only one of that magnitude! He went to Halifax and confessed frankly that he could spend no money on the contest, and only a little time. He and his supporters had all the wealth and influence of the town against them. Conservatives and "professed Liberals" formed the opposing combination. From other sources one is able to gather the impression that he had a very "hot" time. Not only was he called upon to defend his political opinions; he was also called upon to defend his personal integrity. That he was "a fit and proper person" to represent Halifax was testified to by many leading Liberals of the country, including Sir Wilfrid Lawson, John Stuart Mill, and Ernest Jones.

Mill wrote that "by his services to the co-operative cause I consider Mr. Greening deserves well of the working classes and all who wish for improvement in the present relation between capital and labour." Ernest Jones, who was perhaps in an even better position to express an opinion, paid a striking tribute to his fellow-worker in many good causes. He said: "Both in public and private life Mr. E. O. Greening is a most estimable man. He has devoted all his spare time—indeed, more than his spare time—in advocating the cause of progress; and I am sure that both for soundness of principles (with the solitary exception of being in favour of the representation of minorities), and for sterling, quiet ability, and thorough independence of

character, a constituency that elected Mr. Greening would be doing a good service to the great cause of liberty and justice."

A report " of the most extraordinary and largest meeting " held during the election campaign was published as a pamphlet, of which one copy still exists. The meeting was convened with the object of giving Greening an opportunity of replying to " calumnies circulated against him in a certain pamphlet." The first fact brought out at the meeting was that one of the candidates had addressed a letter to Mr. Thomas Hughes—described as " a leader of the co-operative movement "—asking him " if it is within your power to press Mr. Greening's withdrawal." It is apparent that the gentleman referred to must have been none other than Judge Hughes, who was doing so much in various ways for the co-operative movement at the time. Whether the " noble, learned and upright judge " exerted the desired pressure on Greening is not disclosed in the pamphlet, but A. W. Humphrey, in his " History of Labour Representation," states that Hughes did ask Greening to retire, but the latter declined to withdraw, refused arbitration, and urged that if he retired another candidate would be put in his place. What is disclosed in the pamphlet is that the meeting heard Greening's reply to the charges made against him and unanimously passed a resolution in which the statements reflecting upon his personal honour were declared to be complete " falsehoods."

Accepting the resolution as a vote of confidence, Greening declared: " Now, gentlemen, I will say this. I will not be beaten out of the path marked out for me. I will not be bullied out of it, nor seduced out of it. (Cheers.) I am now more fully determined than ever—having your generous support—to fight this battle to the last—(cheers) —and those men, who think they can make me run away

in caricature, will find it is not easy to make me run in reality. (Laughter and cheers.)" That, of course, is just what a man like Greening would say in the circumstances described in the pamphlet.

When the result of the election was declared, Greening found himself at the bottom of the poll, with 2,802 votes, whilst his two opponents had 5,278 and 5,141 votes respectively. It is said that he did better than any other candidate had yet done on a similar "ticket." Yet, at the 1872 Congress (Bolton) Greening stated that he ought to have polled 4,000 votes, but of these "1,000 mysteriously disappeared in the night-time"—a remark which indicates that the methods which characterised elections at Eatanswill were not unknown in Halifax in the 'sixties.

One well-known newspaper, in its obituary notice of Greening, said "he was the first co-operator to fight a Parliamentary election." His old friend, Holyoake, were he alive to-day, would stoutly contest that statement. "My candidature in the Tower Hamlets (1857)," Holyoake wrote in his "Sixty Years of An Agitator's Life," "was the first claim ever made to represent Labour in Parliament; and it was the first time Mr. Mill supported such a contention."

Both Greening and the co-operative movement found some compensation for his defeat at Halifax. No candidate ever had a more loyal or a more enthusiastic body of workers. Speaking at Newcastle in 1873, Greening said that on the day of the election he had 400 unpaid canvassers going from door to door, and that when the result was known, "those working men met and subscribed every penny of the election expenses (about £200) and sent me home without any expense upon me." They also presented an address to him, signed by 1,200 Halifax supporters. No wonder Mrs. Greening remarked in the

eventide of their life : " I was not the only one who thought much of him when he was a young man." The address and a handsome tea and coffee service were presented to him at a big meeting held at the Brown Cow, Halifax, on December 8th, 1868. Some 1,200 workers sat down to tea, and it may be taken for granted that the utmost enthusiasm prevailed, and that Greening was eulogised for his brave but unsuccessful attempt to wean Halifax from its old political traditions.

It was at the Swansea Congress of 1917 that Greening finally nailed his colours to the mast, so far as the formation of a co-operative political party was concerned. Many things have happened inside and outside the co-operative movement since then, but his " come one, come all " attitude on that occasion is still remembered by all who heard him speak. The momentous resolution in favour of direct representation was moved by Mr. W. T. Charter, then a member of the Central Board, and now a director of the Co-operative Wholesale Society. Mr. Charter acknowledged the debt which the movement owed to its friends in Parliament, but contended that " we must have someone on the floor of the House of Commons with a direct and inside knowledge of the co-operative movement." The experience of the movement, particularly during the war period, he added, proved that " behind the whole government organisation there is a very distinct bias against the co-operative movement."

Greening, who could sense the feeling of a meeting as well as most men, must have felt that the tide was flowing against him. Still, nothing daunted, he determined to make a last effort to turn it back into the old channels. His amendment cut right across the plan of direct representation, and instructed the Co-operative Union to invite " the impartial assistance of all friends of Co-operation in Parlia-

ment in resisting any attempts on the part of the Government to levy taxation on our societies for which there is clearly no equitable justification." It will be seen that the amendment, as moved by Greening, was somewhat limited in its application; it only referred to taxation; but his speech widened its effect considerably. "You cannot nominate candidates for Parliament," he said, "put behind them your name, your authority and support, and pay their expenses, and afterwards dissociate yourselves from their speeches and views." By adopting the resolution, he added, the delegates would only be creating discord in the movement. He, for his part, still stood by the old co-operative principle of neutrality in politics and religion, and pointed out "that under this neutrality the success of the movement has been phenomenal."

After Greening sat down there was a distinct pause before a seconder of the amendment appeared in the person of Fred Maddison, and when a vote was taken, out of a total vote of 2,082, only 199 votes were given in support of his amendment.

It was a big disappointment for the veteran to find himself in such a hopeless minority. But he accepted defeat with characteristic graciousness, saying, when it was all over, that he would stand aside and give the new idea a trial. Whether he was "in the right with two or three" time alone will show; but it is clear that the main stream of co-operative thought is now running strongly in the direction of increased co-operative representation in Parliament and upon all local governing and administrative bodies.

The East Nottingham election in 1922, when a co-operative candidate (Mr. A. H. Jones) was unsuccessful, brought Greening to the front again, expressing his old views about co-operators and political action, and even the election to

Parliament of four co-operative candidates in the general election of that year did not cause him to change his opinion that there is no place for a political party inside the co-operative movement. Yet he sent good wishes to one candidate who fought the election as a co-operator (Mr. T. W. Mercer), and he promised another member of the Co-operative Party (Mr. Amos Mann) that he would speak for him if and when he found a constituency. Apparently this offer was only an act of private friendship, but had Greening lived long enough he might have found himself in a rather embarrassing position; for, as the *Catford, Lee, and Lewisham Journal* said in an obituary notice: "In the general election of November last there was not a more enthusiastic worker than he on behalf of Mr. John Zorn in East Lewisham. He adhered to the faith of an old-fashioned Free Trade Liberal."

In the hope of reconciling the interests of participators and non-participators in politics, and preventing a split in the co-operative movement, Greening suggested that the connection between the Co-operative Party and the Co-operative Union should be severed, that the Party should be given complete liberty of political action, and that the Co-operative Union should not be responsible for its policies or political acts. The Party, he thought, would then be "our friends and allies, but no longer the dictators of our political faith." This plan would leave co-operators to act as they please individually, and obviate danger of the movement being disintegrated by political strife. "The programme of the Co-operative Party would exclude," he said to one or two students at the Gloucester Easter gathering in 1922, "all the founders of co-operation if they were alive to-day. You could not set up as a candidate for the Co-operative Party either Robert Owen, Thomas Hughes, Vansittart Neale, John Malcolm Ludlow,

Holyoake, or Thomas Blandford. These men were either Conservatives or Liberals, or Radicals, and not one of them would subscribe to the programme of the Co-operative Party." Whether "these men" would have changed their views, and whether, if living to-day, they would stand in the way of the movement forming its own political party are, and must remain, matters of opinion. Yet it is not unreasonable to think they would have marched with the time, perceiving that "new times demand new methods," better suited to new political and economic conditions. At all events, a majority of active co-operators are now firmly convinced that the movement can no longer refrain from using its political power to defend its economic interests.

Before leaving the subject of "E. O. G. and Politics," it may be of interest to recall a discussion which took place at the 1872 Congress. Lloyd Jones then drew attention to the opposition offered by the National Chamber of Trade to co-operative institutions, and the question of protecting the movement was considered at some length. Ludlow said "it was absolutely necessary for them to have not only one or two but various representatives in Parliament." A delegate from Halifax stated that "if Mr. Morrison came to Halifax they, as a society, would do their utmost to elect him as their representative in the House of Commons," and the report stated "that this declaration was received with great applause." Eventually the following resolution was adopted:—"That the best thanks of this Congress be given to those Members of Parliament who have so faithfully represented the principles of co-operation in the past; that we will sustain them in their labour in future; and that it be remitted to the Central Board to consider what steps should be taken to secure their continuance in the House of Commons."

It is also interesting to note that the report of the Central Board to the next Congress (Newcastle) recommend that "the attention of co-operators ought to be given to the question of representation of the movement in Parliament." Numerous interests, the report stated, "less important commercially and politically, have long had representation there; and it is now becoming important that co-operation should possess a similar advantage."

The newspaper press is not only the most powerful organ of propagandism, but it is a power that can destroy all others.—E. O. G., in 1874.

CHAPTER XIII

THE CO-OPERATIVE JOURNALIST

Greening as a Writer—Comparison with Holyoake—His First Paper—The "Industrial Partnerships Record"—"The Social Economist"—The "Agricultural Economist"—Co-operation in Agriculture—His Contributions to the Co-operative Press—The "Co-operative News"—Greening as an Author.

IT has already been stated that Greening was not happy as a wire-worker's apprentice. Neither the work nor the surroundings appealed to him. He would have been much happier and in a more congenial atmosphere in a newspaper office. Other resources failing, he had late in life to turn to his pen for a living. He must have done a large amount of writing in his early days, but in those days his primary object as a writer was to secure publicity for the various movements in which he was interested, notably that for the emancipation of the negro slaves in South America.

Greening was in many respects eminently fitted to take up a journalistic career, although he was not to the manner born, like Holyoake. He could not paint the picture and adorn the tale with the same readiness and in the same happy fashion as his old friend, but he had "a way wid him" which any rising journalist might copy with advantage. There was no ambiguity about his sentences; he never lost himself or his reader, and when he made use of quotations, which he

often did, one felt that they were there by right, that they were part of the pattern, and that the article would have been incomplete without them.

Axon, in his "Annals of Manchester," states that the *Industrial Partnerships Record* was published in Manchester in 1863, and that it was edited by E. O. Greening and Robert Bailey Walker. Greening was about twenty-seven years of age at this period, and the purpose of this *Record*, as partly explained by its title, was to bring about "a new and better relationship between capital and labour." Holyoake, in his "History of Co-operation," said this "was the first paper which treated co-operation as a commercial movement." Amongst its contents were to be found "share lists" (Holyoake quotes these words in his book) of co-operative concerns.

Bailey Walker, Greening's co-editor, who earned his living as secretary, reporter, and teacher, was a frequent contributor to Pitman's *Co-operator* and the *Co-operative News* in the old days. He was on the arrangements committee for the 1869 Congress; he also attended the Manchester Congress (1870), and at the Birmingham Congress submitted a paper on "The More Complete Organisation of the Co-operative Body."

Greening's next newspaper venture was the *Social Economist*, which made its appearance in London in 1868, Holyoake sharing the editorial chair with him. The object of the *Economist* was said to be "the promotion of co-operation in this and other countries." When editing this paper, Greening on one occasion expostulated with Holyoake about his cutting a sentence in two. Holyoake in reply declared that he would have no objection to cutting his grandmother in two (if legitimately severable) "if the respected old lady stood in the way of the proper finish of a leading article."

The *Economist* was transferred to the promoters of the Manchester "Co-operative News" Company in 1869;

with the idea, according to Holyoake, of giving the *News* a clear field in which to operate. Speaking at the Bolton Congress (1872), Greening said that at last they had a co-operative newspaper, and co-operators could make it " such a power as no other single agency in the movement had yet been." He lived to see the *Co-operative News* celebrate its jubilee, and, to quote his own words, " break the tradition of failure in co-operative journalism."

As an editor, Greening was perhaps seen at his best, certainly at his brightest, in the *Agricultural Economist*, which might be described as the official organ of the Agricultural and Horticultural Association. He gathered around him a staff who could speak with authority on matters appertaining to farmers and gardeners, and the result of their co-operative effort was placed before the public in a most attractive fashion. Greening realised the value of good paper and ink, and his *One and All Gardening Annual* was also worthy of praise for its excellence as an example of good printing. At one time Greening was the gardening editor of the old *Standard* newspaper.

After the publications mentioned had "lived their day and ceased to be " Greening disposed of most of his literary wares in the co-operative market, and his articles appeared principally in the *Co-operative News*, *Scottish Co-operator*, *Millgate Monthly*, *Wheatsheaf*, *Co-operative Official*, and *Copartnership*, the journal which, seeking aims sought by Greening himself, is hastening the day when the worker " shall acquire some share in the control of industry." Perhaps the most striking among his last contributions to the *Co-operative News* was an article entitled " The Case Against the Soviet Government." Drawing attention to this article in a letter to a friend, he said : " I am raising rock-bottom principles into discussion in connection with the Russian treatment of co-operation and co-operators. . . .

I see much to make one anxious in recent events in the co-operative world at home and abroad."

Greening was contributing to all these and other publications almost up to the time of his death, and he was also for a time vice-president of the Union Literary Society at Lewisham. He was also the author of the histories of several co-operative productive societies, among these being a vivid account of the Wigston Hosiers, entitled "A Democratic Copartnership." All these books are brightly written, and some of his best writing is contained between their covers.

During the course of his life Greening wrote a large number of propaganda leaflets and pamphlets on different aspects of Co-operation. Indeed, he was always a busy pamphleteer, whose writings, if collected, would fill several large volumes. Some of his early papers describing his visits to co-operative stores at home and on the continent were collected and re-issued in book form under the titles of "The Co-operative Traveller" and "The Co-operative Traveller Abroad." Both books are now out of print, but they can be consulted in many co-operative libraries, and each still contains much information of value to students and others interested in the history of Co-operation.

There is no death! What seems so is transition.
This life of mortal breath
Is but a suburb of the life elysian,
Whose portal we call death.
—LONGFELLOW.

CHAPTER XIV

THE LAST DECADE

Greening's 85th Birthday—A Veteran Swimmer—Teaching the Young to Dance—Lord Burnham's Tribute—A Pro-Peace Man—Three Busy Years—Greening's Last Public Speech—His Death Announced—Perpetuating His Memory.

GREENING'S wonderful constitution kept him active and almost youthful to the end. One never imagined it possible for him ever to become "a tottering thing of aches and care." Friends frequently asked him if he had found the elixir of life; and well might they add,

. . O'er thy cheek, thy looks, thy air,
Health sits in triumph beaming.

Writing in the *Agricultural Economist* for February, 1914, Greening said: "Although my years are not few reckoned by time, I have no old-age feelings, no weakness, no failing strength or spirits. I seem to have renewed my youth." He received at this time many kind messages of friendship and goodwill, not only from all parts of the United Kingdom and Ireland, but from Hong Kong and Fiji; from the West Indies, British Columbia, Ontario and other parts of Canada; from France and Germany; from India, and many places in the United States. These messages, he confessed, "made my heart full."

Writing to a co-operative colleague towards the close of 1921, Greening said: "recently I have been on a little

lecturing tour at Norwich, Sheffield, and Stocksbridge," and " am gratified to find my voice remains strong enough to address large audiences." He was present as a student at the Co-operative Summer School at Folkestone in August of the same year, and one afternoon went out for a swim in the sea. He did not emulate the feat of Captain Webb, but the fact that he was able to swim in the sea at eighty-five years of age is sufficient evidence of his physical fitness. He also showed the younger folk how the waltz should be danced! At the end of the school his fellow students at the Grange presented him with a volume of poems, edited by Thomas Burke, with the very appropriate title, " A Contented Mind," as a token of their affection for one who, in more senses than one, was an elder student.

The Labour Copartnership Association entertained Greening at a luncheon at the Hotel Cecil, London, on July 20th, 1921, in honour of his eighty-fifth birthday. Young and old colleagues in both the Co-operative and Copartnership Movements were present in large numbers, and many who could not attend sent letters appreciative of his work. Mr. Ramsay Macdonald, in a letter read at the meeting, said " the Co-operative Movement, in particular, owes so much to Mr. Greening that it can never allow his name to fade from the pages of its story." Mr. Duncan M'Innes (a former director of the Co-operative Wholesale Society) paid his tribute to Greening in a message in which he remarked that " ever since I was a young co-operator—and that is fifty-four years ago—his example and the work of his life have been an inspiration to me." Other old friends and colleagues sent equally affectionate messages and eloquent tributes to the work and worth of Mr. Greening.

Lord Burnham, the well-known newspaper proprietor, proposed Greening's health. " It is no exaggeration to

say," he said, "that Mr. Greening's name stands high amongst those of the makers of modern England." Mr. Aneurin Williams, who made his own entry into the co-partnership movement thirty years before, said that though Greening was the Father of the Movement he was still the most active amongst its workers. The United Co-operative Baking Society of Glasgow sent Greening a splendid birthday cake as "a symbol of his perennial youth"; and this cake was cut by the veteran co-operator amid great rejoicing.

Greening's never-failing faith in copartnership principles and the ultimate triumph of the cause he had so long espoused is clearly seen in a passage from a letter written by him on July 6th, 1921. Therein he said, apropos of the national coal stoppage, "the recent settlement of the coal crisis by a profit-sharing arrangement marks a remarkable move in public opinion, and the wider reaching co-operative developments ought to be made as widely known as possible."

Greening was little less alert in 1922. His memory began to play him tricks, but his spirit remained as young, vigorous, and fresh as ever. Journalistic work occupied most of his time, and his beautifully written manuscripts came as a boon and a blessing to the compositors whose business it was to put the articles into type. Left to themselves the "comps" would have fought for the chance of "setting" his "copy." Always sensitive to public opinion, he was afraid, as he said in a letter dated September 20th, 1922, that an article of his, which had just appeared might "deepen the impression that I am a born pro-Boer." "I have been pro-French, pro-Russian, pro-American, pro-Boer, and pro-German in politics," he said, "all because I am, so far as I know, pro-peace between all nations. Now I am pro-peace between capital and labour

—between employer and employed—I expect to suffer the fate of those who won't take violent 'sides.' The peace-makers may be 'blessed,' but they seem to have much to endure in the way of criticism and abuse from those who do not share their views!"

Greening's activity in the last years of his life was indeed remarkable. He appeared at every important co-operative gathering, and was speaking constantly in different parts of the country. It was stated in the *Co-operative News* on November 11th, 1922, that in the previous three years Greening had attended eight Congresses, thirty-five conferences, eighty-five public meetings, one hundred-and-three committee meetings, thirty-two week-end and summer schools, and innumerable other gatherings of a co-operative character! These meetings had entailed much travelling, and at most of them he had made at least one speech; and this work he had done in addition to the journalistic work described in the previous chapter.

With the approach of the general election in 1922, he said, writing from London on October 31st: "We are here in the thick of electioneering and I have to do my bit. I was speaking last night and have to speak again to-morrow." In a further letter, written on November 28th, he said: "One sometimes wonders whether these periodical upheavals are worth what they cost in human effort and cash, but I suppose the educational effect on the people of a country must be very great. Probably now there are so many sides presented to the people by the multiplicity of parties and candidates the educational effects are greater than ever. Let us hope so."

The Christmas of 1922 found Greening in the best of spirits and telling all his friends that he hoped to give them the "good old wish" for many years to come. He attended a "school" arranged by the Co-operative Copartnership

Propaganda Committee at Toynbee Hall, in London, on February 24th, 1923, and there made what proved to be his last public speech. "Your co-operative stores alone," he said on this occasion, addressing co-operators, "will not achieve the Co-operative Commonwealth . . . like the Kingdom of Heaven, the Co-operative Commonwealth is within you." And with this deep saying, pregnant with meaning and spiritual significance, Greening ended his life-long propaganda and educational work on behalf of copartnership and all forms of voluntary co-operation.

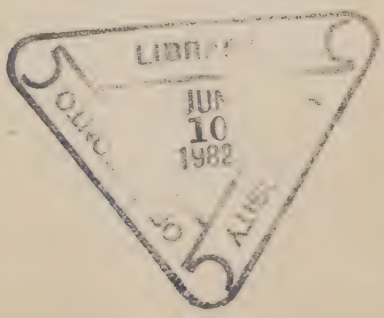
A week or two later he had to take to his bed, suffering from an acute attack of bronchitis. It was apparent from the first that he would have to fight hard to retain his hold on life. His greatest ally was his wonderful constitution, and at one time it actually looked as though, with the devoted help of Mrs. Greening (his second wife), he would pull through and live to continue his work for Co-operation. He was a "marvel" to his doctor, who attributed his passing through a dangerous week successfully to the "abstemious life" he had led in every way. But this progress was not maintained, and on March 12th the news filtered out to the co-operative world that Edward Owen Greening was dead. He died as he had wished to die. He had often said: "I shall live as long as I can, but I have no desire to live longer than I can work." A few days later there was quietly laid to rest, in the cemetery at Hither Green, Lewisham, near Oak Lawn, his home, where he died,

> A man so various that he seemed to be
> Not one but all mankind's epitome.

Little remains to be said. The voice that spoke so eloquently is silent. The pen that wrote so vigorously is still. The figure that graced co-operative gatherings for over sixty years will be seen no more. The inexorable law

of " dust to dust and ashes to ashes " has at last prevailed. New generations of co-operators will arise, but the name and work of Edward Owen Greening will not be forgotten while a copartnership society exists, as long as the Co-operative Congress meets from year to year, or as long as the Co-operative Union remains to guide and promote all forms of co-operative effort. It may be that the memory of this great maker of modern co-operation will be perpetuated in some form in the Co-operative College, the establishment of which he strongly advocated at the Stratford Congress in 1904, and the inauguration of which in a noble building he ardently desired to see. " I contemplate," he said, " the creation of what would practically be the first Co-operative University . . . a centre of light and leading to give direction to our efforts." Many earnest and enthusiastic co-operators are engaged in that work to-day, and its consummation might well be associated with the name of Edward Owen Greening. For although great leaders cease from their labours here, and pass to other realms, we who follow them can, in the words of Longfellow—

> Try to make our common brotherhood wiser and happier ;
> We can build forward where they were forced to leave off,
> And bring nearer to perfection the great edifice which they
> left uncompleted.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